

**Queering the Poetics of *Duende*: Desire, Death, and Intermediality  
in Federico García Lorca's Late Poetry, Drawings, and Film Script**

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## **Declaration of Authorship**

I, Miguel García López, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed: 

Date: 1 June 2017

## Abstract

This thesis reassesses the theory and play of *duende* as a queer poetics of boundary transgressions, offering close readings of Federico García Lorca's less explored later works. Approaching queerness as the performative transgression of normativity, the study concentrates on the poetic collections *Diván del Tamarit* and *Sonetos del amor oscuro* (1934-1936), his late drawings (1930-36), and his film script *Viaje a la luna* (1929-30), arguing that *duende* is articulated via transgressions of the notions of sex, gender and sexual identity; notions of desire, death and spatiotemporal stability; and notions of media representations and intermediality. I examine how the queer subjects and objects Lorca creates in his works and their metaphysical mysteries become poetic artefacts with aesthetic value, offering the artist and the reader/spectator a substantial sensory and spiritual experience. The less explored post-New York works must form an integral part of the vast scholarly corpus on Lorca's late theatre so as to give the poet's entire artistic project the recognition it deserves. Drawing on *duende* and contemporary queer theories will help to map Lorca's aesthetics within the context of critical and biographical analyses of his later period, considering intermediality a key aspect of his more avant-garde phase.

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## Abbreviations

<i>DRAE</i>	<i>Diccionario de la Real Academia Española de la Lengua</i> , 23rd ed. (Madrid: RAE)
MHRA	Modern Humanities Research Association
<i>OC</i>	Federico García Lorca. 1986. <i>Obras Completas</i> , 22nd ed. by Arturo del Hoyo, vols. I, II, and III (Madrid: Aguilar)

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## Introduction. *Duende's Queer Mysteries*

El duende... ¿Dónde está el duende? Por el arco vacío entra un aire mental que sopla con insistencia sobre las cabezas de los muertos, en busca de nuevos paisajes y acentos ignorados: un aire con olor de saliva de niño, de hierba machacada y velo de medusa que anuncia el constante bautizo de las cosas recién creadas.

(OC III: 318)

Queer is by definition *whatever* is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant.

*There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers.*

(Halperin 1995: 62)

## Queer Lorca

Federico García Lorca (1898-1936) is today considered one of the most prominent figures in Spanish literature and culture of the twentieth century. His status as ‘a national trademark’ (Delgado 2008: 2) has been confirmed by a vast amount of scholarly and artistic works and cultural events celebrating him throughout most of the last century and increasingly in the present one. In the period spanning from the 1980s until the late 2010s, Lorca has been reclaimed as a literary treasure and his production has become an unquestionable part of the canon. His national and international recognition began to grow with the multiple homages which took place around the climactic centenary celebrations of his birth in 1998 and which included events in Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States. The multiple centenary tributes ranged from conferences, museum openings and exhibitions<sup>1</sup> to stage and musical productions and performances.<sup>2</sup> On screen, following a 1976 documentary and a TV mini-series in 1987, the Hollywood film production *Muerte en Granada*, directed by Marcos Zurinaga (1997) and starring Andy

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<sup>1</sup> The Casa-Museo Federico García Lorca in Valderrubio (Granada) opened to the public in 1998, letting customers explore the space Lorca inhabited in his childhood and his intimate and material memories preserved by his family. Events in Granada, Fuente Vaqueros and Madrid, where the then President José María Aznar gave a speech at La Residencia de Estudiantes, launched one of the biggest cultural tributes ever held in Spain. A helicopter flying over Granada ‘bombarded’ the city with a rain of one hundred thousand leaflets with Lorca’s poems, an international conference took place there in May, and an archive in Fuente Vaqueros —the Centro de Documentación y Estudios Lorquianos— was inaugurated (León-Sotelo & Ruiz Anton 1998).

<sup>2</sup> Worldwide adaptations of Lorca’s theatre coincided with the centenary celebrations: *Bodas de sangre* was staged in Japan and *Yerma* in Egypt around that period (Doggart 1999:19). Large conferences on Lorca and his legacy took place at Cambridge University and in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the latter being part of the multimedia ‘Lorca Fiesta’, held at the Newcastle Playhouse and considered the ‘largest event outside Spain to commemorate the centenary’ (Doggart 1999: 19).

García, depicted for mainstream audiences the tragic events leading to Lorca's assassination. *Lorquiana* (1998), an album of Lorca's poems and songs performed by Spanish singer Ana Belén, was also released to great acclaim at this time. Since then, Lorca has been referenced and adapted by contemporary Spanish filmmakers like Pedro Almodóvar or Paula Ortiz<sup>3</sup> and international artists such as Philippa Goslett or Nilo Cruz.<sup>4</sup> Amongst the most recent tributes is an album compilation of flamenco songs inspired by Lorca's works entitled *Lorca Vivo* released by *El País* (Limón 2016), and theatre productions of Lorca's plays are still very prolific both in Spain and abroad: *Yerma* ran until the end of the summer of 2016 at the Young Vic theatre in London (Clapp 2016) and *Amor de don Perlimplín con Belisa en su jardín* was staged at La Seca theatre in Barcelona in February 2017 (Pérez Pons 2017). Now that the rights to his *oeuvre* have legally become public domain (Ruiz Mantilla and Koch 2017) eighty years after he died, Lorca's legacy still lives on.

What has made Lorca's fame expand in such a global way is partly to do with the mysteries surrounding his death and his identification with heterodox desire. His brutal assassination by the insurgent armed forces of the Nationalist Right at the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 granted him the status of Republican martyr and made him a symbol of all those oppressed and executed during the war and the subsequent forty-year dictatorship in Spain. Recently, a group of Spanish and British archaeologists has tried in vain to exhume Lorca's lost remains through various excavations aided by the 'Ley para

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<sup>3</sup> Almodóvar's *La mala educación* (2004) and his Oscar-winning *Todo sobre mi madre* (1999) both reference Lorca's life and works, while the recent *La Novia* (2015) is Ortiz's cinematic adaptation of Lorca's play *Bodas de sangre* and received two Goya awards amongst several other accolades.

<sup>4</sup> *Little Ashes* (2008), directed by Paul Morrison and based on a screenplay by UK screenwriter Goslett, recasts Lorca's friendship and love affair with Salvador Dalí in the years of La Residencia de Estudiantes in Madrid. Cuban-American playwright Nilo Cruz, widely acclaimed and winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, wrote the plays *Lorca in a Green Dress* (2003) and *Beauty of the Father* (2006), both featuring Lorca as a character.

la recuperación de la memoria histórica',<sup>5</sup> but his disappearance and execution by Nationalist supporters is still a dark and saddening chapter of Spanish history 'haunt[ing] the national imaginary' (Delgado 2015: 178). In parallel, the many works examining the connections between Lorca's life and work and ideas of sexuality and sexual orientation also attest to his uniqueness and importance as a 'gay icon' (Walters 2007: xxiv) with immense seductive powers.<sup>6</sup> Ángel Sahuquillo claims that 'Federico García Lorca's homosexuality is no longer questioned among those professionally involved in literary criticism or biographies' (2007: 14), and Garlinger affirms that 'in many cases his sexuality is inexorably linked to his literary production' (2002: 710). Indeed, following the processes of censorship and the controversies surrounding Lorca in the past (Mira 2007: 5),<sup>7</sup> there now seems to be a consensus amongst scholars and the public that gender and sexuality are issues likely to be explored and scrutinised in his life and work.

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<sup>5</sup> Rodríguez Zapatero's government passed the historical memory law on 31 October 2007, followed by an excavation of the Alfacar area near Granada in 2009 lacking definitive results (Tremlett 2009). In 2014, there was another dig in a neighbouring area carried out by archaeologist Javier Navarro, historian Miguel Caballero and experts from the University of Nottingham such as Prof. Stephen Roberts, but the exact location of Lorca's remains is still shrouded in mystery (Junquera 2014). A new dig was completed in October 2016, still with no conclusive results (Ruiz Mantilla 2016, 2017a). Rumours and speculations exist among the area's locals that Lorca's remains cannot be found because at some point they were disinterred and transferred to a safe and secret location by his family members and friends in order to be respectfully preserved and to ensure that nothing will ever be built on that ground.

<sup>6</sup> Both Smith (1998a) and Wright (2000) note Lorca's power of seduction, of audiences through his works and of scholars and biographers working within Lorca studies.

<sup>7</sup> In his foreword to Sahuquillo's 2007 work on Lorca and the culture of male homosexuality, Mira shares an anecdote explaining the aggressive hostility he received after the publication of his own book by a well-known Lorca specialist. The latter was precisely taking issue with Mira's mention of the controversy around the publication of *Sonetos del amor oscuro* by Lorca and of the negativity and efforts by Lorca scholars, the aforementioned one among them, to 'silence' the perceived homoeroticism of the collection.

There have been extensive studies, such as those by Binding (1985) and Sahuquillo (2007),<sup>8</sup> arguing that Lorca's homosexuality was expressed, disguised or encoded in his texts. Works like *El público*, *Así que pasen cinco años*, *Oda a Walt Whitman* or *Sonetos del amor oscuro* have been considered clear signs of Lorca's inclusion in a homosexual subculture in Spain. Sahuquillo defines the *culture* of homosexuality or *homosexual culture* as 'the linguistic and aesthetic cultivation of all that refers to the expression of homosexual love and its problematics' (2007: 26), and notes Lorca's ability to share with homosexual audiences and those in the know and hide from others' hostilities the extent of his homosexual experience through his work. Kramer (2008) draws on gender and queer theorists such as Judith Butler and David Halperin to articulate what he calls 'queer metaphor' in Lorca's poems, but in a similar vein as Sahuquillo, he focuses on Lorca's endeavour to encode and hide his homosexual identity in his poetry for fear of prosecution or opprobrium. Similarly, Carlos Jerez-Farrán (2004) analyses Lorca's 'impossible plays' and especially *El público* attending to the dynamics of veiling and revealing the spectacle of homosexual tendencies in the play, while Cordero Sánchez examines a group of Lorca's plays establishing correlations between the 'meta-author' characters and Lorca's biography to argue for the playwright's 'opening or acceptance of his homosexuality' and his 'partial coming out of the closet' (2012: 143). Lorca's biographer Ian Gibson has postulated the poet's homosexual relationships (1999,

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<sup>8</sup> Both Binding and Sahuquillo propose innovative and insightful close readings of Lorca's works, hinging especially on the analysis of homosexuality and homoeroticism as crucial interpretative principles to understand Lorca's imagery and symbolism. The many allusions to childhood and offspring in Lorca's work are read by Binding as a fundamental trope revealing Lorca's awareness of the homophobic opprobrium destined towards those individuals incapable of biological reproduction. When Sahuquillo's work was first published in Spanish in 1991, homosexuality was deemed 'unspeakable' in Lorca scholarship, and his work was pioneering in the attempt to redress this unfair treatment. He finds in Lorca's letters 'the fear and desire to express something hidden and, also, the recurring appearance of motifs and themes relative to silence and to secrets in his poetic work', concluding that these phenomena are 'signs and signals of a discourse related to the expression of homosexual love' (2007: 25), inscribed in what he calls a *homosexual culture*.



2009) and revealed extensive research into his much-debated affair with Salvador Dalí.<sup>9</sup> Further evidence of Lorca's male lovers and companions has since been discovered (Tremlett 2012), with the concomitant application of some of these accounts to the study of his work. All of these examples corroborate Smith's critical argument that there often is an 'equivalence of life and work' (1998b: 65) in Lorca studies, so the poet's life events have often been used to analyse his texts or vice versa and the circumstances of his death have sometimes overshadowed his work.

Nonetheless, Lorca still remains 'a locus of contested meanings and significations' (Wright 2000: 1) and the many mysteries contributing to his strong power of seduction also make his exploration of sexuality and the life-work relationship far from clear. He has been considered 'mendacious in his public dimension and [therefore] seek[ing] an alter ego through which to explain himself', at the same time creating in his works personae with 'a transient and ever-changing essence' (Peral Vega 2015: 6). These mysteries and their causes, while problematic and very particular in Lorca's case, are not unprecedented. As Cleminson and Vázquez García note, 'the mid nineteenth century was a period in which the sexual came to represent the key to a person's mind, body and actions. Sexuality became the secret to be explored and discovered as the truth of the person and indeed of society itself' (Cleminson and Vázquez García 2007: 219), a notion which continued to prevail well into the twentieth century. There were accounts representing the homosexual as a 'tragic, suffering and ultimately failed (or even suicidal) personage destined to self-destruction', a vision which tended to accept 'rather unquestionably the new pathologising, if naturalising theories of psychiatry and the

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<sup>9</sup> In his biography *Federico García Lorca*, Gibson gives an account of Dalí's ambiguous and half-hearted admission in an interview that 'one day [he] gave in to [Lorca's] desires'. The painter described his relationship with Lorca as very intense and special, but he was conflicted about and struggled to delve too much into its sexual aspects: 'We tried it...It hurt me and we had to stop' (Gibson 1987: 440).

sexual sciences' (Cleminson and Vázquez García 2007: 274). Lorca's taste for fatality and the tragic and his recurrent representations of death—as well as the connection usually made between these and his own assassination— have been aligned with these theories and taken to reveal 'a symbol for the desperate struggle to express his love as an equal; a poet [...] who names the reality of his fears made flesh in revelatory folding screens [...] and visual images of castrated desire' (Peral Vega 2015: 4). Generally, pathologising articulations and representations of homosexuality, containing a prominent element keen to essentialise sexual identities, were critiqued and challenged later in the twentieth century by post-Stonewall gay paradigms wishing to affirm a more positive vision of homosexuality and gay individuals and communities in an effort to achieve visibility and social and legal equality. Gay and Lesbian studies between the 1970s and the 1990s tried to rescue historical figures from the silence that had surrounded homosexuality until then and which tended to obliterate sexuality altogether from an author's life and work or to avoid delving too deeply into desire and sexual identity. Mira insists on the academic and political value of the visibility that the gay paradigm offered (2011: 124), but suggests that applying contemporary western mythologies on homosexuality onto earlier or non-western authors can lead to inaccuracies and questionable conclusions like postulating a transhistorical homosexual identity (2011: 125). Ideas and discourses like 'the closet', 'finding one's true identity' or 'expressing one's own self' can prove anachronistic or impose limiting paradigms if applied directly to an earlier time like Lorca's. In the 1990s, Queer theory was consolidated and approaches to homosexuality and other heterodox desires became more concerned with the fluidity and performativity of genders and sexualities, so the study of individuals and works preceding this model became more complex than a mere identification hetero/homo or a search for clues in texts attesting to the author's own sexual identification. Biographical studies of authors like Lorca have

tended to reduce the life and work to a more limiting and easily assimilable gay paradigm (Binding's otherwise remarkable work applies this paradigm too narrowly at times), but the advent of a more fluid queer approach can offer new enlightening insights and discourses. This thesis, without denying the invaluable effort of biographical approaches to Lorca or the necessity of LGBTQ activism, will suggest that looking at Lorca through the queer lens is necessary to comprehend more fully the mysteries of his poetics.

Cleminson and Vázquez García also identify a variety of discourses in the early twentieth century theorising and categorising homosexuality which at times challenged essentialising notions. Alongside the trope of the homosexual as victim and of homosexuality as death and disease, there emerged other discourses, especially in Mediterranean countries such as Spain or Italy, which advocated an unstable form of bisexuality<sup>10</sup> and questioned, usually in playful and irreverent terms, any essentialisation of homosexuality through biology or psychiatry. In this so-called 'Mediterranean model' of sexuality, same-sex relations 'take preference over any strong expression of identity' (Cleminson and Vázquez García 2007: 275) and operate in literary and artistic discourses by means of suggestions, irony, metaphors and silences. I suggest that Lorca can be included in the Mediterranean model, since it can be argued that his poetics goes beyond the binary distinctions homosexual-heterosexual and male-female and resists a narrowly biographical approach. Lorca's life-work dichotomy and the issues of sexuality explored in his works are areas full of nuances. There is not a clear identity between Lorca the man and Lorca the poetic persona,<sup>11</sup> let alone a stable (sexual) identity that can

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<sup>10</sup> Cleminson and Vázquez García examine Álvaro Retana's (1890-1970) works, questioning whether we can consider the Spanish author 'a kind of precursor of today's queer theory', and adding that his work is 'the literary form of a tradition that viewed sex between men as a practice rather than an identity' (2007: 275).

<sup>11</sup> Bonaddio notices that Lorca's poetic world and his biography could be confused, but insists that 'just as there is little to be had from applying the facts of his personal life to the sonnets, his poetry in general also resists such an approach', recognising that it is Lorca the poet who 'engages with and enters his texts' (2010: 196).

be ascribed to the further personae in his poems and plays. The poetic thought underlying his works often challenges simple categorisations, suggesting ‘a desire that, even after Wilde, can be only imperfectly defined, imperfectly named’ (Smith 1998a: 14). Thus Lorca’s quasi-obsessive exploration of the limits of love, sexual desire and mortality will not render easy and unequivocal interpretations; rather, in its emphatic resistance to be categorised, his work is more aptly described as anti-normative or *queer*. Indeed, full of suggestions and silences, ‘Lorca can be gnomic, sceptical and cerebral, adopting what were to be thought of, after his time, as postmodern strategies of disruption, fragmentation and ironic self-awareness’ (Perriam 2007: 150). His works, especially towards the end of his life, displayed a combination of avant-garde experimentalism, intermedial practices and a sense of self-consciousness as an artist and thinker. This reveals an aesthetics often ‘aware of its embedded-ness in a range of literary, philosophical and dramatic traditions; in other words, of its constructedness’ (Perriam 2007: 150). As such, Lorca offered a complex set of works (poems, plays, drawings, lectures, a film script) whose significations go beyond the morbid ironies of his tragic death and the correlations between his life experiences and his poetic images.

Precisely the difficulties in identifying the relationship between Lorca’s life and his work and the problematic dynamics of sexuality and gender call upon the need to introduce a more nuanced theoretical perspective to the study of his *oeuvre*. Queer theory’s focus on the incoherencies between gender and sexuality and their representation will be a suitable analytical tool for this. In her seminal work *Gender Trouble* (1990), Judith Butler argues that gender should be thought of as a cultural fiction, a performative effect of reiterative acts: ‘Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being’ (1990: 33). She claims that there is

nothing authentic and stable about gender and sexuality, they are seen as processes in constant formation which, furthermore, reshape and normalise their very nature over time hiding their causes and effects. The multiplicity of personae Lorca constructs in his works and their fragmented identities respond precisely to this process of constant formation, which blurs the boundaries that would make them discrete and stable and, therefore, 'normal'.

The transformative and performative aspects of queerness parallel the elusive and reiterative nature ascribed to gender and sexual desire, hence queer is seen as a category continuously being formed and reformed, as well as forming and unveiling elusive entities that fail to be categorised according to terms of normativity. In *Bodies that Matter* (1993), Butler posits that 'the regulatory norms of "sex" work in a performative fashion to constitute the materiality of bodies and, more specifically, to materialize the body's sex, to materialize sexual difference in the service of the consolidation of the heterosexual imperative'. Sex is, thus, 'not what one has or a static description of what one is: it will be one of the norms by which the "one" becomes viable at all, that which qualifies a body for life within the domain of cultural intelligibility' (1993: xii). In the face of this performative and regulatory process both corporeal and epistemological, queer 'describes those gestures or analytical models which dramatise incoherencies in the allegedly stable relations between chromosomal sex, gender and sexual desire' (Jagose: 1996: 3). Lorca's poetics is thus liable to be scrutinised through the queer lens by focusing on its difficult relationship with the normal: its resistance to the stability constructed by normativity and its exposure of 'mismatches between sex, gender and desire' (Jagose 1996: 3).<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Weinberg posits that 'queer [...] is not a matter of specific sexual identities but of the world itself. The world is queer, because it is known only through representations that are fragmentary and in themselves queer. Their meanings are always relative, a matter of relationships and constructions [...] things themselves are not queer, rather what is queer is the certainty by which we label things normal and abnormal, decent and obscene, gay and straight' (1996: 11).

To find a common ground amidst Lorca's many complexities and mysteries, it is therefore necessary to analyse the extent to which ideas of queerness can be applied to his *oeuvre* and in which ways they are at work. In other words, speaking of Queer Lorca and queering his poetics will not consist of simply pointing to potentially gay and lesbian characters or insisting on the sexual identity of the author; rather, it will involve revealing in his works the incoherencies between sex, gender and sexuality and placing them against the normative discourses from which they emerge as different and subversive. This thesis is an effort to navigate the complicated terrain where biographical accounts of Lorca and literary criticism on his works converge in the similarly complex and obscure exploration of queer desires and sexualities.

### **Late Lorca: New York, the Avant-Garde and Crossing Boundaries**

It has been said about Lorca that 'more so than any other twentieth-century Spanish writer, he remains a paradoxical embodiment of the local, the national and the global' (Delgado 2008: 2). The particular mixture of Andalusian folklore and avant-garde experimentations found in Lorca's works is one of the main reasons for his high status within Hispanic studies. Smith notes that 'if García Lorca's work is itself characterized by both "avant-garde experimentalism and traditional elements", then García Lorca must remain a key figure in any new approach to Spanish culture, as he was in more traditional literary studies' (1998a: 3). In the early 1930s, Lorca's international fame and recognition grew thanks to the success of his poetry and plays across Europe and in America. This final chapter of his life (1930-1936), following his momentous trip to New York, is an eventful and multifaceted one. Although the argument for a clear line of evolution in

Lorca's *oeuvre* is controversial and perhaps irrelevant,<sup>13</sup> the innovations in his work and his self-recognition as an artist are palpable in the 1930s. His association with traditional literary styles such as Romanticism and Spanish Modernism, with gypsy culture, and with Andalusian folklore was decidedly challenged through his adoption of elements from the European avant-garde, while his international acclaim was valid proof of his transient status between the local and the universal. The intense period leading to his abrupt death, just before the outbreak of the Spanish war, saw Lorca travelling around America, establishing connections with artists from across the globe and immersing himself in a variety of creative practices, while also receiving the praise and influence of artists and scholars both at home and abroad. The late period of his career is thus indicative of his artistic versatility and his unique combination of tradition and modernity.<sup>14</sup>

Starting out as a music student and pianist, Lorca focused on poetry very early in his life and has reached audiences far and wide through his theatre. Furthermore, he was a graphic artist and illustrator, a theatre actor and director, a puppet master, a music composer, a literary theorist and a film scriptwriter. His incursion into multiple creative practices is complemented by the constant crossings of media boundaries within his works. It has often been noted that Lorca was 'a master of visual imagery in his poems and plays [...], characterized by a vibrant use of color, unusual descriptions, and insightful juxtapositions of imagery' (Cavanaugh 1995: 13). His plays make use of lyrical

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<sup>13</sup> Lorca's brother, poet, lecturer, literary critic and historian Francisco García Lorca, was convinced that a 'clear line of evolution' in Lorca's work was extremely difficult if not impossible to establish, and that he went through a 'continuous metamorphosis' (1989: 232) as an artist. McDermid suggests that arguing for an 'illusory progressive development in García Lorca's thinking' is futile, proposing instead that 'the poet's writings throughout his career are driven by the same overarching concerns' (2007: 4).

<sup>14</sup> Bonaddio notices that there is a 'tension between the poet's adoption of a romantic rhetoric and his increasing awareness of new modes of expression; between his attraction to the sincere expression of lyric verse and his movement towards more impersonal modes – a move necessary for him to be counted amongst his contemporaries' (2010: 18).

verse or cinematic terms;<sup>15</sup> his poems use musical references and usually play with the musicality and viscosity of linguistic images and connections through poetic devices;<sup>16</sup> and many of his drawings fuse and combine language and image.

Lorca's diversification into numerous media can be inscribed in the framework of avant-garde artists working in literature, painting and performance simultaneously at this time. A quintessential example of this multimedia artistic production in early twentieth-century Europe is the French artist Jean Cocteau (1889-1963), whose work bears many resemblances to Lorca's in its negotiation with Surrealist elements and in the similarities found in both their aesthetics. It is relevant to comment on the assumption that Cocteau:

referred to practically all of his work as "poésie". His plays were "poésie de théâtre" ("theatre poetry"), his novels "poésie de roman" ("novel poetry"), and his drawings "poésie graphique" ("graphic poetry"). When talking about his first-ever film, the experimental *Le Sang d'un Poète*, he once said: "I used film as a vehicle for poetry in order to show things that I cannot say". (Phillips 2000: 1117)

Whether Cocteau was a direct influence on Lorca's work is open to debate (although it is documented that Lorca knew Cocteau's work and vice versa),<sup>17</sup> but it is remarkable that both of them were aware that their artistic creativity did not have to be limited to only one medium. Like Cocteau's use of film as an alternative means of poetic expression, Lorca

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<sup>15</sup>*La casa de Bernarda Alba* (1936) is subtitled 'un documental fotográfico'; *El paseo de Buster Keaton* (1928) refers to cinema as a medium, to the Hollywood industry and to film celebrities; and *Bodas de sangre* (1934) adheres a lullaby sung by a character to the dialogue and a long lyrical passage recited by the Moon.

<sup>16</sup> The use of free verse in *Poeta en Nueva York* allows the poet to create juxtapositions of disconnected images in contiguous and rapid visual sequences, evidencing the awareness of linguistic sound and rhythmic connections: 'Lo que importa es esto: hueco. Mundo solo. Desembocadura. | Alba no. Fábula inerte. | Sólo esto: Desembocadura.' ('Navidad en el Hudson', ll. 32-34) (1988: 150); '¡Qué esfuerzo! | ¡Qué esfuerzo del caballo | por ser perro! | ¡Qué esfuerzo del perro por ser golondrina!' ('Muerte', ll. 1-4) (1988: 183).

<sup>17</sup> Morris relays Lorca's impressions after seeing Cocteau's *Le sang d'un poète* in 1932 (1980: 123) and Cocteau wrote a poem to commemorate Lorca years after his death, in 1953 (included in *Poèmes: Appoggiatures et Paraprosodies*).



claimed that at times his drawings helped him express what he could not put into poetic language.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, he sought other artistic ways to express and represent his ideas, through new channels of transmission, sometimes through many at once. The late Lorca, very much like Cocteau, refused to be stopped by media limits, and the spirit of the avant-garde he experienced at the Residencia de Estudiantes suited him very well in this respect. Recent studies have looked at the ‘cross-pollination’ taking place among the arts—and the sciences—at the beginning of the twentieth century, revealing that artists and scientists alike became aware of the ‘relational, nonrigid nature of the universe’ (Gala 2011: 2). The inter-artistic collaborations and intermediality so characteristic of this moment in time became more and more prominent in Lorca’s late works, in that he made conscious use of disparate elements associated with particular media and included them into other media.<sup>19</sup> Crossing media boundaries becomes in Lorca’s poetics an act of transgression, a process of (re)creation, extracting new aspects from the conventional by disrupting it, but also a way out of the conundrum posed by the limitations of a given artistic medium.

Among the definitions of medium emerging from current discourses and discussions of intermediality, Wolf (2011) proposes a distinction which hinges on the semiotic organisation of information as well as on the cultural conventions that regulate

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<sup>18</sup> In a letter to art critic Sebastián Gasch dated 8 September 1928, Lorca explains his intermedial creative process to his friend: ‘Ahora empiezo a escribir y a dibujar poesías como ésta que le envío dedicada. Cuando un asunto es demasiado largo o tiene poéticamente una emoción manida, lo resuelvo con los lápices. Esto me alegra y divierte de manera extraordinaria’ (Cavanaugh 1995: 20).

<sup>19</sup> Schröter (2011) argues that in the context of intermediality, it can be recognised that ‘media do not exist disconnected from one another’ (2011: 2). Rather than offer a univocal and general definition, he proposes a series of discourses based on scholarly debates and models which refer to different approaches to issues of intermediality. In light of this, three of them are of special relevance to the purposes of this thesis: ‘formal (or transmedial) intermediality’; ‘transformational intermediality’; and ‘ontological intermediality’. Formal intermediality or transmediality is a concept ‘based on formal structures not “specific” to one medium but found in different media’; ‘transformational intermediality’ is a model centred around the ‘representation of one medium through another medium’, which in turn leads to ‘ontological intermediality: a model suggesting that media always already exist in relation to other media’ (2011: 2).

its perception as a medium. In this broad sense, a medium ‘is a conventionally and culturally distinct means of communication, specified [...] by particular technical or institutional channels’ and ‘by the use of one or more semiotic systems’ (Wolf 2011: 2). Lorca’s poetry can be considered a distinct medium in opposition to his plays, his drawings or his film script, attending to what they transmit and how they transmit it through one or more semiotic systems (language, image) and their technical and institutional differences (materials used, publication or exhibition, adaptation to cinema, etc.). In light of this, intermediality refers to ‘any transgression of boundaries between conventionally distinct media’ (Wolf 2011: 3). Lorca’s later corpus is characterised by its multimediality, and more precisely by its awareness of media transferences and combinations. The crossing and blurring of media borders in the name of artistic expression can be aligned with Lorca’s taste for the unconventional and the different in literature, in art and in the expression of identity ‘as a disturbed, frequently obsessive, probing of hostile Otherness’ (Johnston 1999: 57). The recurrent intermediality in Lorca’s later works corroborates the transgressive aspect of his aesthetics and his intention to move beyond a reductive or restrictive vision of the arts, favouring a sense of fluidity among them and a wish to mix what is considered ‘other’ with what is considered normal or conventional. In spite of these aesthetic developments and of the global recognition his late plays have received (especially his so-called rural trilogy),<sup>20</sup> Lorca’s other late works have been relatively neglected by scholars and the public.

Lorca’s late poetry, particularly his two longer post-New York collections *Diván del Tamarit* and *Sonetos del amor oscuro* (1934-36), continues to be a relatively marginal

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<sup>20</sup> For some time, it became conventional among scholars to speak of *Yerma*, *Bodas de sangre* and *La casa de Bernarda Alba* as a climactic trilogy, although there is evidence that Lorca’s intention was to include a different play, today unfinished, as the third one. Furthermore, critics have questioned the idea that the three tragedies were a major project Lorca was striving towards, since some of the testimonies before his death point to his preference for the more experimental ‘impossible’ plays (*Así que pasen cinco años* and *El público*) (Wright 2007: 42).

part of Lorca studies, with only a few scholarly works primarily devoted to it: Andrew A. Anderson's (1990) work is still the main point of reference, while most other works analyse it in passing.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, Lorca's drawings have seldom been the object of study of scholars, but have instead served as a tool to illustrate his poetic or dramatic works, especially in the works by Oppenheimer (1986) and Cavanaugh (1995).<sup>22</sup> Lorca's film script *Viaje a la luna* (1929-30), a fascinating intermedial artefact, despite being written around the same time as the much-acclaimed *Poeta en Nueva York* was published, was lost for most of the twentieth century and not realised as a film until 1998 as part of the centenary celebrations. Felten (2005) and Puyal (2011) have acknowledged the importance of Lorca's *Viaje a la luna* within the poet's *oeuvre*, especially in relation to Lorca's negotiation with Surrealism in his late works and the influence that contemporaries Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí had on his work.<sup>23</sup> Nonetheless, an extensive study of the film script in the context of Lorca's later corpus is still missing. These three media are representative of Lorca's more avant-garde period in that they

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<sup>21</sup> Andrew A. Anderson (1990) examines Lorca's final poetic collections from his trip to New York until his death. His textual analyses attend primarily to the specificities of Lorca's imagery and symbology, drawing from the influence of Ancient Greece and Rome, the Renaissance, Romanticism and Arabic literature; and some biographical and historical accounts. Federico Bonaddio (2010) draws on the notion of self-consciousness to analyse Lorca's poetic collections as a whole, devoting his last chapter to Lorca's late works. Barón Palma (1990) and Newton (1992) pay attention to *Diván del Tamarit* in some depth, while López Castellón (1981) focuses on *Sonetos del amor oscuro* within his analysis of death in Lorca's poetry.

<sup>22</sup> Oppenheimer's (1986) and Cavanaugh's (1995) works analyse Lorca's graphic works in close relation to his poems, his theatre plays and his life. Their works offer insightful connections between some motifs in the drawings to Lorca's poems, especially those of hands and of the figure of Saint Sebastian (Oppenheimer 1986) and the reading of arabesques in both Lorca's late drawings and his late poems (Cavanaugh 1995). Cavanaugh (1995) insists that the purpose of analysing the drawings in their own right will 'provide maps of [Lorca's] thought' and 'new insight into Lorca's poems, creating a space in which they may dialogue with one another and allowing this dialogue to inform our perception and interpretation' (1995: 35). Further studies include David K. Loughran's (1978), Felicia Hardison Londré's (1984), and Estelle Irizarry's (1984), all focusing on the relationship between the drawings and Lorca's poetry and plays.

<sup>23</sup> Puyal (2011) describes the interest that cinema had awaken amongst Spanish artists, especially in the context of the Residencia de Estudiantes in Madrid, and the knowledge and wish for experimentation many of them had about the film medium. Felten (2007) draws on the many correlations between Lorca's *Viaje a la luna* and Buñuel and Dalí's *Un chien andalou*, examining the Surrealist structural and thematic elements common to both.

reveal intermediality as a key aspect of his poetic project. This study aims to examine them closely and in their own right in order to show that their importance within the late corpus confirms Lorca's awareness of his growth and confidence as a multimedia artist.

An insightful entry into Lorca's final years is his first-person discourse reflecting on his aesthetics, parts of which can be found scattered among his lectures and other prose texts. The late Lorca's sense of authority as an artist and thinker and his awareness of the avant-garde's innovations were instilled into his lessons on poetry and art in the early 1930s. The academic lectures, also somewhat marginal within his production, aim to articulate and disseminate his artistic thought and are proof of his (self-)recognition. Mayhew (2011a, 2011b) and Martínez Hernández (2011) have focused on the lectures to argue for the need to consider the poet's thought and aesthetic theory as fundamental to the study of his poetic and artistic production. *Teoría y juego del duende*, delivered in Buenos Aires on 20 October 1933 at the *Sociedad de Amigos del Arte*, is probably the best-known among them. A clear example of Lorca's mixture of traditional and avant-garde elements and of the local and the universal, the *duende* lecture is a very enlightening signpost to his late works. Its lyrical and playful approach and its daring mixture of genres, styles and multiple references to European philosophers, artists and Spanish popular culture situate intermediality and the transgression of geographical and artistic limits at the centre of the poet's later production. Teasing out these aspects and reassessing Lorca's late corpus including partly unexplored works and media offers an opportunity to map his final years as a crucial period in his career.

### ***Lo insólito del duende: the Limits of Desire and Death***

Understood as a notion originating in Andalusian folklore and used to qualify artistic creation and performance, *duende* is defined as a mysterious and ineffable charm or

enchantment, ‘encanto misterioso e inefable’ (*DRAE*), as well as ‘an impish household spirit’ (Maurer 2007: 35).<sup>24</sup> Lorca’s appropriation of this seemingly obscure term in *Teoría y juego del duende* serves a double purpose that relates precisely to the two aspects of the title (theory and play) as well as the two senses of the word *duende*. The fantastical and supernatural spirit which in folkloric tales is said to cause mayhem and play tricks on humans mirrors Lorca’s ‘play’ with poetic images to explain and theorise his aesthetic thought. Simultaneously, the performance of *duende* and its perception hinge on its mysterious and malleable nature, shapeshifting and crossing boundaries as the impish creature would change form and hide people’s belongings in order to mock them. In this same vein, Lorca sets about explaining *duende* as a simple and lighthearted lesson on poetry but tricks his audience into attending a lecture on twentieth-century aesthetics, European philosophy and intermediality, as well as a poetry recital.

Lorca had travelled to Argentina to attend the production of his play *Bodas de sangre*.<sup>25</sup> From the perspective of a renowned poet and playwright, he was now in an authoritative position to theorise about his own work. However, Lorca’s tone in *Teoría y juego del duende* is determined to sound quite conversational and colloquial in front of his audience, speaking as a friend or fellow student rather than as a lecturer or professor. He opens the lecture with an anecdote in which he reminisces about himself as a former student and the usual boredom he experienced attending tedious lectures. This establishes two different styles (of lecturing and of making art) inscribed in different times: he

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<sup>24</sup> The word originates in the Spanish expression *duen de la casa* or *dueño de la casa*, and supposedly denotes ‘un espíritu fantástico que habita, travesando, en algunas viviendas, y que suele presentarse con figura de viejo o de niño’ (Muñoz 2013: 12). Sarah Wright (2000) analysed the ‘trickster-function’ present in Lorca’s plays, a phenomenon intimately related to the tricking or ‘trasteador’ aspect of *duende* inherited from folk tradition.

<sup>25</sup> The production, which had had its first run at the Maipo Theatre, reopened with Lola Membrives at the bigger Avenida Theatre for its second run on 25 October 1933. ‘*Blood Wedding* played for several months and made a huge amount of money for the poet, to whom Lola Membrives and her husband had agreed to pay ten per cent of the takings. Lorca’s letters home showed to what an extent such success was boosting his ego’ (Gibson 1990: 368).

describes his experience in the Residencia de Estudiantes, where old Spanish aristocracy attended lectures, as a boring and ash-ridden experience. Against this old time, his lecture is meant to represent a new era: all that is old, conventional and obsolete needs to be replaced by a new aesthetic approach, a new artistic style. The poet thus proclaims *duende* as the spirit of this new era. He situates it in the Spanish peninsula (by citing the land between four Spanish rivers roughly encompassing the whole national territory) but also in Argentina, near the Plata river. The ever-expanding description of *duende* as the lecture progresses gradually opens it up to Europe, to Ancient Greece and Rome and to America, so it ends up losing its original Hispanic specificity and gains a universal aspect. Roaming between the concrete and the abstract and jumping across borders and boundaries, Lorca's *duende* honours its shapeshifting trickster ancestor and becomes nothing but elusive and mysterious.

Comparing the old and new styles, the latter led by *duende*, Lorca describes the artistic process as a battle with this mysterious spirit, applying it to poetry and philosophy, to painting, theatre and film; musical performance in singing, dancing and composition;<sup>26</sup> and even to the bullfighter's performance in the traditional Spanish *tauromaquia*.<sup>27</sup> He finds a common ground in all these different media and practices: the transgression of norms and canons, the edges and limits, and the physical wounds that cut bodies open. Lorca perceives signs of *duende* in artists like Goya, El Greco, Zurbarán or Picasso in that they broke away from canons and conventions and created new forms

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<sup>26</sup> Lorca cites Brailowsky's piano performances of Chopin or Darius Milhaud's innovative use of polytonality, amongst others (*OC* III: 306-309).

<sup>27</sup> In his exploration of bullfighting, Lorca compares the *Fiesta Nacional* with a religious ritual or a mass. The adoration and sacrifice to a deity and the imagery prominent in both scenarios is physical violence, blood spilled in sacrifice and the effects that the wound has on the audience and the ritual itself. In a Roman Catholic mass, Christ's blood sacrifice symbolises the heroic deed of the saviour and martyr, while in a bullfight, the protagonist is also a hero who battles the animal to death and risks his life in pursuit of fame and glory. In both cases, the violent and gory scene causes admiration in the audience, it produces an emotional response which Lorca equates with the aesthetic pleasure of art.

never seen before. Zurbarán's use of *chiaroscuro*, for instance, inspired by Caravaggio's paintings and Spanish polychromatic sculpture, created a dramatic sense of mystery and *tenebrismo* in his reproduction of martyr figures.<sup>28</sup> Goya's obscurity and vividness in his depiction of images of horror—which he painted, Lorca claims, using his knees and fists—also exemplify the transgression of canons of beauty in art. Lorca posits that the inspiration required to create an artwork does not stem from imaginary external forces like angels or muses, but from the physical and spiritual violence that *duende* brings about within the artist.

A key notion that Lorca develops in the lecture is a transference and collaboration among the arts, a wish to contest the clear-cut distinctions usually ascribed to them:

todas las artes son capaces de duende, pero donde encuentra más campo, como es natural, es en la música, en la danza y en la poesía hablada, ya que estas necesitan un cuerpo vivo que interprete, porque son formas que nacen y mueren de modo perpetuo y alcanzan sus contornos sobre un presente exacto. (*OC* III: 311)

In spite of his emphasis on performative media in the theory of *duende*, his claim that all arts are capable of acquiring a poetic dimension which can transgress norms and cross boundaries, both geographical and artistic, is a groundbreaking notion marking the precepts of his late works. Crucially, this idea is also applicable to media which could be considered less performative: in this thesis I will argue that the still unexamined specificities of his late poetry, his drawings and his film script—despite lacking the more

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<sup>28</sup> *Tenebrismo*, or Tenebrism, is a baroque pictorial style derived from the work of Caravaggio especially, based on the use of stark contrasts of light and shadow. In the *Diccionario de civilización y cultura españolas*, Quesada Marco defines it as: 'Estilo pictórico barroco basado en el empleo sistemático de fuertes contrastes de luces y de sombras en los que las partes iluminadas resaltan con intensidad. El tenebrismo español fue el resultado de la fusión de las técnicas del claroscuro empleadas por los pintores naturalistas —Morales, Navarrete, Roelas, Herrera, Cotán— con las de Caravaggio. El estilo y las técnicas tenebristas triunfan plenamente en la pintura de Francisco Ribalta (1564-1628) y de José de Ribera (1591-1652)' (1997: 442).

obvious performative aspects of theatre or film— will still show *duende*'s queering of limits and boundaries, as well as the intermedial use of poetic expression.

Death, another key aspect of the lecture, is ubiquitous in Lorca's *oeuvre*. From the elegiac tone of some of his long poems to the pervasive tragedy in his plays and his constant use of ominous and deadly symbology, Lorca's production shows an intimate and unique involvement with mortality. Virtually every work devoted to the study of Lorca has examined or mentioned death to some extent. To name just a few, Anderson (1986) notes the influence of the Petrarchan sonnet in Lorca's treatment of death as an intimate ally in the exploration of nature, human experience and love; Soria Olmedo (2006) postulates that Lorca's exploration of death is indebted to Nietzsche and his theories on the Dionysian and the Apollonian; and there are several studies on the influences of the classical world on Lorca's use of tragedy and fatality as aesthetic principles in his poems and plays.<sup>29</sup> Of more relevance to this study is an early work by Salinas which asserts that '[t]he vision of life and man that gleams and shines forth in Lorca's work is founded on death. Lorca understands, feels life through death' (1962: 102). In *Teoría y juego del duende*, Lorca establishes an intimate relation between art and life, but that relation includes a clear awareness of—and even a need for—mortality. Yet the link between these two poles is far from clear-cut in his works. Martínez Hernández equates Lorca's exploration of human experience with a philosophical or religious endeavour, since he posits that both philosophy and religion attempt to understand the meaning of human life as tightly related to the awareness of mortality (2011:94).

More recently, Oscar Enrique Muñoz (2013) wrote an extensive philosophical-poetic study on the many meanings of *duende*, its origins and pervasiveness in Spanish

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<sup>29</sup> Camacho Rojo (2006) edited an extensive collection of essays devoted to the analysis of the classical tradition present in the poetic and dramatic works by Lorca: from intertextual references and recreations of classical mythology to the influence of Greek philosophers like Plato and the use of Nietzschean theories based on classical ideas.



literature, and some of its articulations across Lorca's production. He suggests that Lorca's *duende* is a poetics of the limit and the liminal (Muñoz 2013: 49), of desire as the moment of transit—which remains perpetually suspended in time—from life to death and from the virtual idea to the created form. *Duende*'s transgressions and boundary-crossings are characterised by an acute sensibility towards the limits of desire and mortality. Lorca considers the connection art-life-death underpinned by *duende* as undoubtedly rooted in Hispanic culture: 'España es el único país donde la muerte es el espectáculo nacional, donde la muerte toca largos clarines a la llegada de las primaveras, y su arte está siempre regido por un duende agudo que le ha dado su diferencia y su calidad de invención' (OC III: 313). The supposed clear-cut distinction between living and dying, pleasure and pain, or love and destruction is heavily distorted and destabilised by Lorca. The Lorquian aesthetics of death relates to the immanence of mortality in human imagination and to the poetic force that death's interrelation with human life (especially with the impulses related to desire) brings about. Any symbol of life processes and energies acquires a more powerful contrast when confronted with death and that coalescence of radical opposites is sought as a factor of subversion and novelty. What Lorca calls *lo insólito* encapsulates what an artist must achieve with his/her work. He wants to create poetic images that can offer unprecedented associations of meaning, drawing on aspects of reality that, beautiful or gruesome, are familiar in their evocation of destruction and creation but add new aspects that have not been experienced before and will never be repeated.

Perhaps the use of the term *duende* in close relation to flamenco music,<sup>30</sup> a sense that still survives today, has not only contributed to enhance Lorca's folkloric roots and

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<sup>30</sup> Webster (2005) traces the relationship between flamenco and the notion of *duende* as a historical, musical and anthropological journey around Andalusia.

Andalusian flavour worldwide, but has also led to the overlooking of his extended use of the term to encompass all the arts and transcend specific genres and styles. Maurer calls the *duende* lecture Lorca's 'last prolonged statement on the process of poetic composition and poetic inspiration' (2007: 35), while Mayhew insists that 'one of the things that Lorca's lecture is about is the *performative transmission* of artistic creativity' (2011b: 167) rather than just a theory of inspiration. He posits that '[...] the dominance of philosophy and hermeneutics in late modern poetics tends to pull in the opposite direction from the issues of literary performance that interested García Lorca: performance brings poetry into a pragmatic context removed from the realm of abstract, disembodied thought' (Mayhew 2011a: 286). Indeed, in this lecture Lorca created a 'new aesthetic category' which unites 'life with artistic creation' (Martínez Hernández 2011: 94) in that it shows the psychic and existential effects that art can have on an audience. Attending to both the thought processes behind an artwork and the performative aspects of its transmission and reception, there is an emphasis on what art *does* rather than what it *is*. On performance rather than essence. What *duende* does, however, is bring life and death together through art.

As such, *duende* implies a transgression of established norms by reinterpreting a certain work of art or style or purposefully distorting or reconfiguring an artistic canon or model.<sup>31</sup> It is a quality ascribed to the creator of a work of art, an inherent force which possesses and takes hold of the artist's body to infuse in it the capacity to produce the artistic work. Additionally, it is a quality that *must* be sensorily perceived by the reader/spectator/viewer for the work to be deemed good or worthy of being an art form. Lorca describes this interaction between the artist and the spectator as the necessary qualitative

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<sup>31</sup> Mixing the Spanish perspective with a wider, Western European one, Lorca cites Goethe as the precursor of *duende* in his praise of the Italian musician Paganini. The musician's power consisted in performing a mediocre work of art but giving it a new performative aspect that could be perceived and felt by an audience as unprecedented.

condition of creative practices, which must offer immediacy, vivid sensory stimulation and an aspect of novelty. The artefact created or performed under the influence of *duende* is alive but short-lived and ephemeral, a ‘forma viva’ which as a result is faced with an imminent death. This sense of ‘life’ infused into the artwork comes from both the novelty sought through transgressions of norms and from the very act of performance carried out by a living body in front of a live audience. Each act of performance aided by *duende* ‘rechaza toda la dulce geometría aprendida, [...] rompe los estilos’ (OC III: 310). In breaking styles and geometry, that is, in breaking the norms associated with a creative medium, the artist performatively rearticulates and redefines that normative system and creates something unprecedented, shocking or subversive. This creation will thus emerge as anti-normative, odd or, indeed, *queer*. Lorca’s poetics favours the creation of bodies, personae and images which cannot quite fit into the normative, but whose identities fluctuate and metamorphose, constantly mutating to adopt a state of liminality or becoming. The relationship between life and death, being and non-being, is therefore a *queer* one.

*Duende* acts as a dual desire, or a dual drive in the psychoanalytical sense, towards life and death. Lorca scholars have often acknowledged the relevance of psychoanalytical discourse in their analyses of the poet’s work, especially in the recurrent interrelation of desire and mortality: the notion of Eros and Thanatos in Sigmund Freud’s terminology.<sup>32</sup> Smith (1998a) was one of the pioneering scholars to take this approach, which Feal Delibe (1973) and Martínez Nadal (1988) foreshadowed in their Freudian

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<sup>32</sup> *Diván del Tamarit* represents, according to Newton (1992) and Barón Palma (1990), an overarching narrative of the loss of the beloved after his [sic] death by water. Conversely, *Sonetos del amor oscuro* reappropriates the love sonnet tradition to convey the profound instability of sexual desire and its reversibility with pain, suffering and mortality.

readings of Lorca.<sup>33</sup> Verónica Leuci (2008) applies Eros and Thanatos to her study of *Sonetos del amor oscuro* in order to articulate Lorca's construction of a love mysticism (paralleled with that of the Spanish mystical poetic tradition) which entails the union of desire and martyrdom in the form of death, suffering and physical fragmentation. While the purpose of this thesis is not to offer an exhaustive psychoanalytical reading of Lorca's poetic discourse based on Freud's theories, the ubiquity and interweaving nature of desire and death in Lorca's late poetics requires a careful consideration of this trope in its wider context. Freud's psychoanalytical theory explored the concepts of the 'pleasure principle' and 'the death drive' in all living beings, a theory named after the classical Greek mythical characters Eros and Thanatos. The former represents the instinct of survival, the movement towards life-preservation and creation, which finds reassurance in the 'avoidance of unpleasure or the production of pleasure' (Freud 1961: 1) and drives the subject to merge with another body. The latter is the body's tendency towards self-destruction, an inherent search for the state prior to existence, death being the endpoint of life as well as its origin.

Conversely, Lorca's late works explore the notion of the drives in relation to artistic expression, the sense of selfhood and erotic desire.<sup>34</sup> The Lorquian Eros is associated with pleasure, sexual desire and sensory perception, but it presents desire as an

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<sup>33</sup> Smith argued that 'in its twin stress on the psychic and the social, psychoanalysis is particularly appropriate to the study of drama' (1998a: 9), and, more particularly, that '[psychoanalysis] has the capacity to put into question precisely the repressions and interdictions forming the basis of religious confession and societal restraint. This is vital for a figure such as García Lorca, whose works, even at their most hermetic, have often been interpreted violently as a personal testimony that betrays the secrets of their creator's soul' (1998a: 10). Martínez Nadal's (1988) work analyses the intricate relationship between love and death in Lorca's play *El público* and by extension in the rest of his *oeuvre*, while Feal Delibe (1973) analyses Eros and Thanatos in Lorca's poetic symbols, arguing that 'La muerte corta brusca, alevosamente, la trayectoria de la vida. Pero podría pensarse también que el viaje tiene una típica significación sexual, y entonces la muerte, (o interrupción del viaje) cobra el valor de símbolo de un fracaso amoroso' (1973: 114).

<sup>34</sup> As López Castellón notes: 'sexo y muerte (el *eros* y el *thanatos* freudiano) constituyen la trama de la existencia humana, y su poder es tan fuerte que el individuo se vive poseído por una fuerza indomable que no hará posible la responsabilidad ni la culpa' (1981: 125).

overpowering human instinct transcending and superseding ideas of sex, gender and self-identification. Thanatos coalesces with Eros in that the poet often longs for a state between life and death, for a wound bringing the limits of both together. The intertwining of Eros and Thanatos conveys *duende*'s liminality: 'el amor en Lorca es un deseo de continua liminalidad, un impulso irrefrenable a situarse en el torbellino donde la propia individualidad queda disuelta y se experimenta la continuidad con el ser amado' (Muñoz 2013: 179). In *duende*'s search for *lo insólito* and the transgressive, desire and mortality acquire a prominent aesthetic stance and their values are interrelated and subverted. A mortal yet regenerative wound signifies the circular and spiralling process in which desire is always inscribed.

### ***Duende* and Queer Temporalities**

Because *duende* creates and exposes transgressions of limits through artistic performance, it operates as a queer strategy. It underlines the constructed and normative nature of art, especially in its articulation of the supposedly rigid limits of life and death and in its ostensible representation of stable identities. *Duende* figures the paradoxical coalescence and incoherency between desire as a creative impulse and a destructive one, the site in which the seemingly linear progression from life to death gets disrupted and the apparently discrete nature of bodies, genders and sexualities gets blurred.

To examine Lorca's late works in light of *Teoría y juego del duende* and its queerness, I will have recourse to a number of contemporary queer approaches. Hinging on its oppositional nature and its state of constant formation, queer's performative and transformative aspects relate to a great extent to Lorca's poetics: both performatively challenge and transgress established norms that promote fixed visions of identity, the body and existence. Lorca's poetics —understood as *poiesis* or the creative production of

a work of art through whichever medium— tries to contest this fixity by destabilising subjects and objects and presenting them as fragmented, conflictive and in constant mutation. As a result, the poetic images through the lens of *duende* fail to be categorised as canonical or conventional: they produce shock and appear queer and unfamiliar, *lo insólito*, due to their anti-normative nature.

Queerness, as Lee Edelman characterises it in his application of Lacanian psychoanalytical discourse to queer theory, insists on ‘[opposing] itself to the logic of opposition’ (2004: 4) and therefore on negating the very system from which it emerges as different, aberrant or abnormal. In destabilising norms relating to bodies, gender and sexuality, the queer exposes both the regulatory power and the constructed nature of normative discourses. In parallel, *duende*’s creative function implies a process of constant (trans)formation and redefinition of norms and whatever falls from the norm. Always mutable and liminal, this is a process which never ends, a desire that is never fulfilled and a wound that never heals. *Duende*, in its cyclical destruction/recreation of (hetero)normativity through its never-sealed wound, actively subverts the very notions of stable identities and meanings, suggesting ever-changing new aspects emerging ‘not as innate or essential but as always in construction and in conflict with its environment’ (Kramer 2008: 15). Bodies get fragmented and face destruction, but they also get recreated and reassembled, enlivened by their wounds, so their identity and ontological status elude stasis and stability.

*Duende*’s systematic shattering of the confines of life and death dares to pose the question of how reliable artistic representation is to convey any true identity fully, since the seemingly clear boundaries between being and non-being are being challenged and blurred. If being and non-being get confused, what things are and what things mean are no longer clear. Lorca creates a web of meaning reconstructions and deferrals: always

new and different from one another but constantly referring to further meanings, like Derrida's *différance*.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, the possibility of ever achieving a sense of absolute, univocal identity is problematised. This brings about the queer, that which is never fixed or stable and resists identity and categorisation by a totalising normativity.

The emergence of the queer will suggest 'a refusal —the appropriately perverse refusal that characterises queer theory— of every substantialization of identity, which is always oppositionally defined, and, by extension, of history as linear narrative [...] in which meaning succeeds at revealing itself —*as itself*— through time' (Edelman 2004:

4). Lorca's *duende* creates subjects and objects in constant formation, queer entities which, rather than presenting essential aspects or immutable identities, suffer endless metamorphoses and are always in the process of becoming. Simultaneously being destructured or disintegrated, wounded or about to die, they swiftly become something other and shape-shift in a constant cycle of regeneration. Any substantiation of identity is therefore difficult if not impossible.

Edelman's theorisation of queerness in its inextricable relation to temporality, especially futurity, and death, will be an invaluable framework in this study's analysis of Lorca's late works. *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (2004), drawing on Lacan, positions the queer —or the *sinthomosexual* as Edelman also terms it— as the surplus which evades the 'reproductive futurism'<sup>36</sup> of heteronormativity and thus negates

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<sup>35</sup> Derrida posits that meaning consists of a continuous and inescapable system of differences and deferrals: 'To write is to know that what has not yet been produced within literality has no other dwelling place', and therefore, meaning 'must await being said or written in order to inhabit itself, and in order to become, by differing from itself, what it is: meaning.' (1978: 11). 'Life negates itself in literature only so that it may survive better. So that it may *be* better. It does not negate itself any more than it affirms itself: it differs from itself, defers itself, and writes itself as *différance*' (Derrida 1978: 95).

<sup>36</sup> Binding (1985) and Smith (1998a), among others, have examined, albeit from radically different perspectives, ideas of offspring and reproduction as intimately related to homosexuality and sexual frustration in Lorca's works. The 'reproductive futurism' underlying these analyses theorises death as the emerging consequence of the homosexual's inability to procreate.

the possibility of future as the eventual realisation of meaning as complete and absolute, instead standing for the Lacanian death drive. The foreclosure of any possibility of fulfilment and therefore of the meaning promised by that fantasy of fulfilment announces death as the point of inflection towards which the open wound tends.<sup>37</sup> The Lacanian twin drives that lead the subject to both libidinal fulfilment and self-destruction pose a threat to the very ideas of identity and meaning, and therefore to the construction and validity of sexual identities. Indeed Lorca's *duende*, *qua* queer category, not only disrupts norms of gender and sexual desire, it also questions the reliability of language to produce any meaning which is stable or immutable, in turn questioning the linearity of time and its supposedly stable and continuous succession. Life does not necessarily lead to death. This supposed linear journey gets disrupted and reversed, and at times becomes cyclical or remains crystallised or unresolved.

The intrinsic relationship between subjectivity/identity and temporality has been considered one of the main issues concerning queer theory in recent years. McCallum and Tuhkanen conclude that '[w]ith the notion of queerness strategically and critically posited not as an identity or a substantive mode of being but as a way of becoming, temporality is necessarily already bound up in the queer' (2011: 8). Issues of subjectivity in late Lorca's complex representation of bodies and identities and of temporality in the spatiotemporal breaches and discontinuities find a point of confluence in *duende*'s never-ending transgression of norms. This resonates with the performative complexities of queerness. José Esteban Muñoz, drawing on Edelman's ideas on futurity and queer time, argues that 'straight time tells us that there is no future but the here and now of our everyday life. The only futurity promised is that of reproductive majoritarian heterosexuality' and insists that

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<sup>37</sup> As Edelman notes: the 'constant movement toward realisation cannot be divorced, however, from a will to undo what is thereby instituted, to begin again *ex nihilo*. For the death drive marks the excess embedded within the Symbolic through the loss, the Real loss, that the advent of the signifier effects' (2004: 9).



‘we gain a greater conceptual and theoretical leverage if we see queerness as something that is not yet here’ (2009: 22). This implies a glimpse of queerness in futurity, not in Edelman’s reproductive futurism, but in the imagining, the *fantasy*, the impulse towards a horizon of being beyond the here and now, or in that sense of becoming what is yet to come. Muñoz sees the need for queerness as a utopia, a fantasy of the not-yet-realised but potentially realisable.

Indeed, Lorca’s representation of desire as a perpetually unsealed wound, pointing towards the potentiality of death and the potential recreation that death can bring, is a sign of a queer fantasy. The wound opens a space in which both death and life are potentialities, reversible forces that never get resolved but escape the linearity of time and remain cyclical and liminal, although inevitably elusive and mysterious.

### **Thesis Outline: *Duende*’s Play in Lorca’s Late Corpus**

Approaching queerness as the performative transgression of normativity, this thesis reassesses the theory and play of *duende* as a queer poetics of boundary transgressions, offering close readings of Lorca’s less explored later works. It concentrates on the poetic collections *Diván del Tamarit* and *Sonetos del amor oscuro* (1934-1936), his late drawings (1930-36), and his film script *Viaje a la luna* (1929-30), arguing that *duende* is articulated via transgressions of the notions of sex, gender and sexual identity; notions of desire, death and spatiotemporal stability; and notions of media representation and intermediality.

The first, longer chapter of the thesis is divided into two parts corresponding to each of Lorca’s final poetic collections. *Poiesis*, understood as the creative production of artefacts with aesthetic value, applies etymologically to poetry, the medium which Lorca favoured the most throughout his *oeuvre*. *Teoría y juego del duende* speaks of the poetic

image as the basis of the artistic task, the starting point which Lorca opens up to further media. It stands to reason then that the analysis of his poetic collections will require a more extensive in-depth examination in this study. In *Diván del Tamarit*, the aloof and indeterminate poetic voice presents glimpses of a beloved who remains perpetually elusive and difficult to identify because of his/her ungendered and fragmentary identity. The poet's desire beats intensely, but the poetic voice resists the possibility of fulfilment, aligning Eros with Thanatos in an interrelated and ambivalent cycle of pleasure and pain defying the linearity of time and the logical route from life to death. Spatiotemporal disruptions, I argue, mirror the queering of bodies and sensory perceptions, signalling the poet's realisation that identity is constantly destructured and recreated, in a cyclical process of metamorphosis. Drawing on Edelman and Muñoz and ideas of queer futurity and utopia, I conclude that the poet and the beloved are forced to inhabit a liminal space in which ontological and spatiotemporal coordinates are suspended, unintelligible and unnameable, where the death drive signalled by the queer emerges to announce an impossible fantasy yet to come in which all limits and norms cease to exist.

The second part of the chapter is devoted to Lorca's *Sonetos del amor oscuro*, in which I suggest that 'obscure' encapsulates the mysterious, inarticulable and norm-transgressing qualities of desire explored in the collection from the perspectives of queerness and *duende*. The love in the sonnets is neither clearly homosexual nor heterosexual, because precisely gender indeterminacy, fluidity and reversibility of roles all abound in the sonnet cycle. It is this permeability which makes the poet and the beloved queer, their simultaneously erotic and destructive relationship being as ambivalent as their elusive (sexual) identities. *Chiaroscuro* is recurrent in the imagery Lorca creates, reinforcing the pleasure/pain and being/non-being reversibility and the subversion of tropes taken from the Petrarchan and Spanish Mystical traditions, both of

which are reappropriated by Lorca to create scenes in which the limits of life and death, sexual desire and spiritual suffering become destabilised and blurred. Central to Lorca's poetic works is the representation of the human body and the importance of the five senses. As this thesis will show, this is also true of his other creative practices and plays a prominent role in his aesthetics, as it becomes in the late works a vehicle to explore intermediality and transgress the limits of desire and death. He claimed that a poet must be a master of the five bodily senses (*OC* III: 229) and after his visit to New York and his experimentations with avant-garde artistic practices —*Poeta en Nueva York*'s free verse, Surrealist or Expressionist elements are an example— he invented unprecedented ways to articulate these in his poems and prompted his increased practice of other media.

In the second chapter, I carry out close readings of Lorca's drawings from his late period in their own right as plastic poems, drawing on Bakhtin's ideas on the grotesque as the convergence of life and death. Lorca redefines in his graphic works some of the conventions associated with portraits, shifting the gaze to male figures such as sailors and dandies and foregrounding unsettling details of corporeal fragmentation, bodily issue and fusions of human with animal or floral motifs. The beguiling 'Venus (Agua sexual)' presents a female body in a grotesque state of physical disintegration which conjoins the genital issue of blood with sexual desire and pain, while the spine-chilling 'Solo la muerte' depicts a monstrous figure superseding sex and gender identification and questioning the logic of sensory perception and life/death differentiation which resonates with Lorca's liminal characters from *El público* (Desnudo Rojo) and *Viaje a la luna* (the Man of Veins). In his final drawings severed hands, arrows and abstract human and animal parts articulate the wound, bleeding and the piercing of flesh as signs of a crystallised liminal moment in which life and death coalesce through the aesthetic pleasure and interrogation allowed by visual poetry.

In the third chapter I examine Lorca's film script *Viaje a la luna*, arguing that its tableau structure creates an anti-narrative in which spatiotemporal transgression leads to a spectacle of death which encircles the juxtaposed images and characters in a cycle of interwoven humour, horror, sexual desire and violence. The close reading of the film script will take into account the innovations Lorca had discovered in the early cinema he experienced when studying in Madrid, especially his homage to Buster Keaton in one of his earlier short plays. The correlations between *Viaje a la luna* and *Un chien andalou* also attest to Lorca's negotiations with Surrealism and his appropriation of cinematic elements to recreate Lorquian imagery via the film medium, to make poetic images 'watchable'. Drawing on ideas of the body, the 'cinema of attractions' and the Freudian Eros and Thanatos and scopophilia, I will suggest that the film script repositions *duende's* queering of limits as a poetic-cinematic montage in which erotic desire and death are inscribed in a circle, a cyclical journey to the moon, leading them only to each other and leaving the potential spectator in a state of uncertainty, shock and disorientation.

The fourth and final chapter looks at the three media examined in a broader, comparative sense. Thinking through ideas and discourses on intermediality, the close readings focus on the recurrent word-image interactions which occur within the three media as well as on aspects derived from Lorca's aesthetics which are articulated in specific ways through each medium, particularly motifs like roots, hands, roses and circular objects and processes like doublings and fusions. The calligrams, sailors and *commedia dell'arte* characters, and the particularly intermedial and grotesque drawing 'Muerte de Santa Rodegunda' will offer glimpses into Lorca's poetic fluidity, not only roaming across media limits but suggesting that identity itself may be too unstable and fluid to be delimited.

Despite the relative marginality of Lorca's late works (with the exception of his theatre), it is in the period following his New York phase where the poet achieved a clearer sense of self-assurance in his queer aesthetics. Following a deep existential crisis and a period of self-doubt preceding his journey overseas, with his multimedia practices Lorca acquired new avant-garde tastes and greater recognition in the 1930s. *Teoría y juego del duende* encapsulates his aesthetic authority and epitomises the principles of his poetic project, which at this stage is no longer restricted to a single medium, but roams across poetry, film, theatre and the visual arts and confidently combines traditional and folkloric elements and modern techniques and imagery. The status of the three media examined in this study as opposed to Lorca's theatre hinges on their performative poetic qualities and the different processes of transition from inception to performance. A poem remains a written text unless it is recited out loud, as does a film script unless it is adapted to the screen. A painting or drawing is in theory only performed once by the artist creating it, and the spectator admiring it performs a somewhat passive role. The transition from the embryonic written text or canvas to its live performance and reception is a more straightforward process in the theatre, and the ephemeral and embodied nature of a stage performance is one of the core aspects of *duende*. However, this thesis will argue that written poetry, drawing and filmic texts can also evidence this potential transition. In parallel, the limitations imposed by the medium of theatre come into play. The plastic freedom afforded by poetry, drawing or film is more constrained in the theatre. Key aspects of *duende* like fluidity of identities, bodily destructurations, fusions and gender indeterminacy are prominent in the three media selected, while these phenomena generally prove more challenging to represent in a theatre performance. It is no wonder

that the Lorquian plays which contain these (*El público, Así que pasen cinco años*)<sup>38</sup> have often been termed ‘unplayable’ or ‘impossible’ plays. If Lorca nonetheless believed that all media can participate of *duende*’s performative function and become ‘formas vivas’ with aesthetic value to their audiences despite the challenges they might present, it is worth exploring how these other three media can effect *duende*’s performativity in their own unique ways.

My particular analysis of the three media selected relates to broader issues of language, thought and representation. Poetry is simultaneously very tightly related to linguistic connections and syntax while offering more flexibility for imagistic experimentation by not being necessarily constrained by narrative logic or linearity. The poet can experiment more easily with spatiotemporal limits and imagery, as Lorca does innovatively in the 1930s, while being aware of poetry’s heavy reliance on linguistic structures and semantic associations. Poetry’s economy of language and self-referential techniques and devices make it doubly apt to explore both its temporal and epistemological relation to and dependence on linguistic systems. The particular relationship between temporality, thought, language and visuality so integral to poetry also makes it a very suitable ally to graphic or visual media; hence, the analysis of Lorca’s drawings and film script will offer an expansion on this relationship through these other media’s specificities. The imagistic nature of the three media taps into what Dennis (2000) calls the problem of expression in Lorca, seen as a sign of communicative obstacles between the writer and the reader/spectator which the artist tries to resolve by resorting to multimedia elements. I suggest that this problem of expression ties in with *duende*’s crossings of media boundaries, since specific medium constraints are bound up

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<sup>38</sup> Wright (2000) examines switches in gender, shape-shifting and the confusion of boundaries as functions of ‘the trickster’ in Lorca’s plays *El público, Así que pasen cinco años* and *Amor de Don Perlimplín con Belisa en su jardín*. Smith (1998a) looks at the fluidity of identities and deferred desires in *Así que pasen cinco años* and *El público*.

with Lorca's search for newly-created images. Jumps across media become necessary in the pursuit of unexpected representations and the attempt to queer the limits of meaning.

This study ultimately acknowledges that Lorca's iconic status and uniqueness are still paired with his many facets and complexities: his legacy lives on, but he remains a figure full of ambiguities and mysteries. What I will examine is how the queer subjects and objects Lorca creates and their metaphysical mysteries become poetic artefacts with aesthetic value, offering the artist and the reader/spectator a substantial sensory and spiritual experience. The principles articulated in the theory of *duende* and their play in Lorca's late works will help to map the poet's aesthetics within the context of critical and biographical analyses of his later period. In addition, by focusing on the specific articulations of *duende* through his poetic, filmic, and graphic works and their intermedial correlations, this thesis will also propose a reassessment of Lorca's later years. The less explored post-New York works must form an integral part of the vast scholarly corpus on Lorca's late theatre so as to give the poet's entire artistic project the recognition it deserves. Drawing on his self-reflexive statement on the mysteries of his poetics and looking at these mysteries from a contemporary point of view will shed light on some of the unresolved issues that still characterise his life and work.

## 1. *Diván del Tamarit* and *Sonetos del amor oscuro*: Queer Time and Metamorphic Identities

¿Poesía? Pues vamos: es la unión de dos palabras  
que uno nunca supuso que pudieran juntarse,  
y que forman algo así como un misterio.

(OC III: 573)

Lo insólito ha desplazado  
taxativamente a lo rutinario.

(Caballero Bonald 2016: 1)

After the much acclaimed publication of *Romancero gitano* (1928) and his year-long sojourn in New York and Cuba, Lorca returned to Spain in 1930 with a new-found awareness of his fame and recognition.<sup>39</sup> Apart from embarking on a series of projects such as his travelling theatre company *La Barraca*, his numerous interviews and lectures and the staging of his new plays both in Spain and abroad, in his final years Lorca continued to write poetry quite productively. His long elegiac poem *Llanto por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías* and his Galician-language cycle *Seis poemas galegos* were both published in 1935. They constitute the poet's heartfelt homages each in its own particular way.<sup>40</sup> The former is Lorca's last published poetic work and his personal farewell and lament for the sudden death of his close friend, gored to death in a bullfight in 1934. The latter pays tribute to the Galician linguistic, literary and cultural roots cohabiting with Spanish for centuries in the Iberian peninsula as well as to Lorca's experience of the Galician community exiled in Argentina.

<sup>39</sup> Lorca said to his parents in a letter: 'I've become a fashionable little boy [...] after my useful and advantageous trip to America' (Stainton 1998: 268; cited in Bonaddio 2010:170), also mentioning the many editors intent on publishing his work at the time (García Lorca 1997: 695).

<sup>40</sup> Due to space and time limitations, I will not examine *Lamento por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías* and *Seis poemas galegos* in detail in this thesis, also because the specific nature of both works is outside the scope of this study. Textual analyses of both works can be found in Anderson (1990) and Bonaddio (2010). However, there is room for further research relating mainly to the elegiac aspect of the former long poem and its awareness of the inevitability and imminence of death, as well as its connection with temporality ('A las cinco de la tarde' is obsessively repeated in the first part of the poem) and the process of sensory apprehension of death in the form of mourning and the sense of loss. Lorca's linguistic exploration of Galician and its literary tradition (especially his homage to Rosalía de Castro) in *Seis poemas galegos* is also worth studying further, as this brief cycle constitutes the only work by Lorca written entirely in a language other than Spanish.



Lorca's two longer and more substantial late poetic works are *Diván del Tamarit* and *Sonetos del amor oscuro* (1934-1936), both of them published posthumously and relatively unknown to the public and to scholars during the first decades following the poet's death. *Diván del Tamarit* comprises a collection of eleven gacelas or ghazals<sup>41</sup> and nine casidas, written between 1931 and 1935. Both the gacela and the casida are poetic forms of Arabic origin characterised by their short or medium length (four to fifteen lines of varying syllable length), often arranged in couplets, tercets or quatrains and usually with a clear rhyming pattern. In *Diván del Tamarit*, these poetic forms are slightly modified and present a mixture of stanzas (often within the same poem), multiple syllable lengths with a preference for longer lines (usually seven, nine and eleven syllables) and varying rhyming patterns with the occasional use of assonant rhyme or free verse.

*Sonetos del amor oscuro*, Lorca's final poetic cycle, consists of eleven sonnets, ten of which adhere to the traditional Gongorine rhyming scheme (ABBA/ABBA/CDC/DCD)<sup>42</sup> and also to its syllabification in eleven-syllable lines of verse organised in two quatrains and two tercets. *Sonetos* constitutes, much like *Diván*, an effort to return to more conventional metre and poetic form as opposed to the free verse and formal experimentations of *Poeta en Nueva York* (1929-30).<sup>43</sup> Despite their imagery and motifs retaining the innovations of their predecessor (Bonaddio 2010: 173), the gacela, the casida and the sonnet were well-established poetic forms which entail a technical

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<sup>41</sup> The 'Gacela del mercado matutino', despite carrying the gacela title, was excluded from the collection as it was going to be published by Lorca in 1934-36 for reasons still unknown (Anderson 1990: 141-2).

<sup>42</sup> The exception is 'El poeta habla por teléfono con el amor', which presents the slightly different pattern ABBA/ABBA/CDC/CDC.

<sup>43</sup> Talens (2000) hypothesises Lorca's intention of including these and other late sonnets in a larger project entitled *El jardín de los sonetos* never realised. In Maurer's view, this truncated endeavour 'would have brought together some of the many [sonnets] he had written over the course of his lifetime', an example of the return to the sonnet as a 'trend in Spanish poetry' (2007: 37).

challenge in terms of composition to varying degrees. The sonnet is indeed the most prominent in the Western tradition. As such, it constitutes a major technical effort for the poet due to its tight structural constrictions. This added awareness of linguistic and poetic norms is particularly relevant to the paradoxical attempt to break and subvert norms underlying both collections, a transgressive effort that will be analysed in this chapter in relation to *duende* and its capacity to queer and destabilise normativity.

While *Diván del Tamarit* was published in 1940 in the *Revista Hispánica Moderna* (New York), *Sonetos del amor oscuro* had to suffer through a lengthy delay before its publication. It was also surrounded by controversy at the time its various editions came out in 1983 and 1984. The first one, a clandestine version made public by an anonymous source prompted the subsequent authorised edition by Lorca's family members the following year (Eisenberg 1988: 261).<sup>44</sup> Some critics believed at the time that the collection's 'homosexual overtones' (Eisenberg 1988: 262; Mira 2007: 5; Plaza Chillón 2008: 6) were the reason that the sonnets had not been published earlier, while Lorca's heirs claimed that the collection—which belonged to a bigger project Lorca was working on—was already being prepared for publication at the time the 'pirated' edition appeared (Eisenberg 1988: 262). While publication issues and lost manuscripts are less than uncommon in the case of Lorca's *oeuvre* and many believe that 'further unpublished works held by the Fundación [García Lorca] will emerge' (Smith 1998a: 3), there is a consensus among scholars that both *Diván del Tamarit* and *Sonetos del amor oscuro*, *qua* collections of love poems, ought to be read as homoerotic and that this may be the reason they have been somewhat neglected or censored in the past. Thinking especially of

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<sup>44</sup> The clandestine edition, postmarked 14 December 1983 in Granada, was sent anonymously to various literary figures and magazines in Spain and abroad and is believed to have originated from one of the copies or manuscripts given by Lorca to friends before his death, although the identity of the publisher(s) is still unknown. In March 1984, the authorised edition was published in the Madrid newspaper *ABC* (Eisenberg 1988: 261-262).

*Sonetos del amor oscuro* and *El público*, Maurer laments that ‘the two Lorca works that deal most boldly and directly with homoeroticism exist, today, only in ‘unfinished’ versions’ (2007: 37). Lorca’s death made any potential ‘finished’ versions impossible. Fortunately, scholars have tried to pay due respect to these and other more marginal works in Lorca’s *oeuvre* (Smith 1998a; Wright 2000; Jerez-Farrán 2004; Anderson 1990; Bonaddio 2010), but the plays still overshadow the sonnet cycle and the rest of the late poetry. One of the main purposes of this chapter is to change this and, more generally through this thesis, to bring the less explored late works to a more prominent position within Lorca studies.

A definitive factor that characterises both late poetic collections is their perceived complexity and obscurity. *Diván* and *Sonetos* are closer to the avant-garde in their thematic and imagistic content and structural configuration than to the traditional poetic forms in which they are inscribed. In his seminal work on Lorca’s late poetry, Andrew A. Anderson (1990) suggests that the late collections represent what he terms the ‘obscurity of modern verse’ (1990: 5) or its opaque systems of signification. This obscurity might be worth considering in parallel with Maurer’s argument:

these were the years when Lorca’s poetry was turning away from the logic of traditional metaphor to images which attempt to evade rational analysis and to produce (in his words) “poetic emotion which is uncontrolled and virginal, free of walls, a freestanding poetry with its own newly-created laws”; a world of mysterious images “without explainable causes and effects”. (1998: viii)

Anderson traces this phenomenon back to ‘further development by many recent poets of techniques pioneered by Baudelaire and espoused by the Symbolists, with the concomitant abandonment of self-explanatory and “logical” styles of writing’ (1990: 5). The depuration of poetic language to its basic units of signification and the primacy given

to synthesis, nuances, suggestiveness and metaphorical associations are staples of Lorca's poems. Breaking from easily decipherable symbols and metaphorical references, they lend themselves to a plurality of interpretations and tend to resist clear and univocal readings. While the structure of Lorca's late poems, based on what Anderson calls a 'logic of imagery' or 'logic of the imagination', indeed contrasts with earlier periods in Lorca's poetics in its reliance on a more transgressive vision of poetic expression, I shall argue that this 'obscurity' or impenetrability responds to Lorca's questioning of the ability of language to convey stable or univocal meanings (the title *Sonnets of obscure love* is an apt signal of this, as will be discussed through the close readings of this collection). The processes of destabilisation taking place in the poems articulate Lorca's theory of *duende* and can be examined as queer processes. Lorca seeks to create poetry which will defy established norms and reinterpret them to achieve the unexpected, *lo insólito*. Adjusting to a more fluid paradigm, they elude static significations and reveal permeable and metamorphic identities. This departure from the norm will need to render these images equivocal, unstable and in constant transformation. It is the mystery of their elusiveness that Lorca seeks. '[E]l duende ama el borde, la herida' (*OC* III: 310), and precisely the wound and the boundary will signal Lorca's queering of *poiesis*.

Both collections present scenarios and images fragmented at the spatiotemporal level, in which discontinuities and asynchronies abound. The characters and personae in the poems are also unstable at the corporeal level, with bodies wounded or fragmented and on the brink of complete decomposition or deconstruction. The limits of being and non-being are distorted and the characters' emotional states are variable and fluid. These incongruities and dissonances reinforce the difficulty in ascribing fully stable identities to the poetic characters and in acquiring a clear sense of temporality or logical coherence in the poems. Following newly-created logical laws, a sense of stable and reliable meaning

that can be univocally interpreted becomes unlikely, even virtually impossible.

Consequently, it is necessary to focus on the multiple distortions, incongruities and fragmentations the poetic images create in order to identify —if only momentarily— the processes of transgression Lorca is carrying out. *Duende*'s constant baptism of newly-created things (*OC* III: 318) and its close link to the senses and corporeality will partly inform the close readings of these processes, at the same time revealing *duende*'s queer function by destabilising norms of gender and desire and opening up the limits of being and mortality.

### ***Diván del Tamarit: Glimpses of a Fantasy***

The word *diván*, from the Arabic *diwan*, denotes a poetic collection by one or more authors in the Islamic tradition. Despite the common scholarly assertion that *Diván del Tamarit* tries to imitate, in style and thematic content, the Arabic background it pays homage to in its title and poetic forms, its references to Islamic and Middle Eastern poetry and cultures are actually very few if at all significant.<sup>45</sup> The city of Granada ('El Tamarit' was the name of the country estate of Lorca's uncle near his hometown), with its Islamic heritage so pervasive in Hispanic culture even today, becomes the spatial setting and protagonist in a number of poems in the collection, which constitutes the only substantial Arabic connection. Other than the references to the Andalusian city, the Arabic world in *Diván* is but a remote allusion in passing around which Lorca elaborates his own imagery and tone; his naïveté and his love of flowers, plants and nature; his use of *chiaroscuro* and plays of opposites; and his search for shocking and unexpected

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<sup>45</sup> The 'Gacela del amor imprevisto' correlates the beloved's forehead with a moonlit square in which 'Mil caballitos persas se dormían', an orientalist reference which may be added to the less evident but recurrent images of gardens ('Gacela del amor que no se deja ver', 'Casida de los ramos'). The latter image has been associated with the garden of Gethsemane (Maurer 2007: 35) at the foot of the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem, but the reference obviously resonates more directly with Andalusian landscapes and folklore (Pedrosa 2012: 335).

metaphors and sensory interrelations. Orientalism is the backdrop to the fantasy Lorca creates connecting the geographical certainty of Granada with the uncertainty surrounding the characters and images in the poems.

### **Gacelas: The Five Senses and Spatiotemporal Fractures**

The gacelas or ghazals mostly present brief glimpses into the poetic voice's fragmentary psyche and sensory experiences, usually addressing his beloved or other purposely ambiguous characters or entities in passages which attempt to break spatiotemporal continuity and semantic logic. It is never clear who the mysterious beloved is or if there is any possibility for the poetic voice to really know or articulate his/her identity. The beloved's body changes constantly, as does the poet's perception of and relationship with the beloved. Desire and death become processes —always in development and never resolved— inherent in the poet's discourse, both shaping and threatening his existence and his knowledge of reality. Crucially, these unstable processes and the difficulty in ascribing to the poet and his beloved any stable signs of identity reveal Lorca's intention to question the reliance on language as provider of such identification. Hence, the language of the gacelas is elusive, polysemic and ambiguous, full of wounds and fractures, of *duende*. Mystery, corporeal fragmentation and semantic incongruity are the staples of the first part of *Diván del Tamarit*, the point of entry into Lorca's post-New York poetics.

The first of the ghazals, entitled 'Gacela primera del amor imprevisto', introduces two prominent entities who fail to interact with each other throughout the poem: the poetic 'I' and his addressee or beloved. The poet is baffled by the beloved's presence and tries in vain to grasp —to be in physical contact with and to understand— the beloved and attain a state of communion with him/her. From start to end, the beloved's identity is vague and ambiguous. It resists categorisation in terms of binary distinctions of

chromosomal sex or gender. The poet's deliberate use of ungendered forms of address and the lack of gender-distinctive adjectives and nouns reinforce the beloved's fluid identity and start to problematise the notions of sex or gender stability. Precisely this ambiguity, together with the instability of the poet's relationship with the beloved and the (failed) attempt to break spatiotemporal logic are the interweaving problems facing the poetic voice in the gacela.

The poem's structure presents a symmetrical organisation into four quatrains. The poet's tone sounds quite direct and conversational throughout the text despite the complex imagery used. These two aspects confer a logical standpoint to the poem, which is thwarted by the inaccessibility and unintelligibility which the poet ascribes to his beloved. Also, the clear and logical temporal succession of images, establishing a spatiotemporal interaction between the poet and the beloved will be destabilised in the final two lines. Three of the four quatrains take place in a past time and lead to the poet's final reflections in the present, but this present time retroactively challenges the preceding linear progression. Initially, in the first quatrain the poetic voice characterises his addressee in terms of his/her body, which possesses qualities unintelligible to everyone:

Nadie comprendía el perfume  
de la oscura magnolia de tu vientre.  
Nadie sabía que martirizabas  
un colibrí de amor entre los dientes. (2010: 11, ll. 1-4)

The perpetual absence of sex and gender markers makes the beloved's body indeterminate, mysterious and inexplicable. It is situated in opposition to the norm, it is queered, for its corporeality ('vientre', 'dientes') escapes rationality and articulation ('Nadie comprendía', 'Nadie sabía') and thus resists normativity's identification of

gender or sex binaries. The poet's position is dictated by his desire to approach his addressee, but access to the addressee has been denied both physically and intelligibly. What 'nobody understood' was a dark place in the addressee's innermost space, within his/her stomach, where a dark magnolia flower produced its scent. The ambiguity of the beloved's body is further complicated by the use of the word 'vientre', which can designate the ungendered central part of the human anatomy where internal organs are located (belly or stomach) but which can also carry gendered associations of birth and motherhood (like the English 'womb'), and therefore of femininity. The latter connotation is paired with the birth and growth of the magnolia flower, but the neutrality of the rest of the stanza and the proximity of the stomach to the genital area further suggests an erotic connotation which the poet makes purposely ungendered. This ambiguity nonetheless works to the poet's advantage, in that the stanza refers to both the very indeterminacy of the beloved's corporeal limits as well as to the poet's failure to comprehend them, precisely because of their gender-blurring nature. The body of the beloved is thus presented as a queer entity whose capacity to be understood lies in its mysterious physical limits, produced by and producing that body. It is capable of torturing ('martirizabas') and biting ('entre los dientes') as well as of engendering life: it is both an admired body and a feared body, even called 'an enemy' later on. Its gender duality is paired with its dual capacity to generate life and inflict pain. Further, the beloved's body can defy temporal laws and boundaries, since it seems to be suspended in a past time ('comprendía', 'sabía', 'martirizabas') and keeps changing and mutating throughout the poem.

The senses are the vehicle through which the poet accesses his emotional states and the beloved's, both highly unstable. His initial state of awe and admiration of his beloved alludes to the senses of smell and taste ('el perfume | de la oscura magnolia de tu vientre'; 'un colibrí de amor entre los dientes'). The sense of touch follows, signalling the



poet's desire to be in physical contact with the addressee and the difficulty of such a task in the face of an incongruous temporality ('yo enlazaba cuatro noches') and of the beloved's inaccessible but alluring corporeality ('tu cintura, enemiga de la nieve'). This last image keeps evoking physical contact by contrasting sensations of coldness and heat, pairing the addressee's waist (suggestive of the genital area) with snow (which suggests the addressee's heat by opposition). The poet is thus confronted with the beloved's enticing body which he wants to pin down, comprehend and possess, but the battling of his desire with his awareness of time's implacable force renders the conflict futile and the beloved unattainable.

Time in the *gacela* is both an enemy that needs to be defeated and an almighty powerful force that seems impossible to destroy. The poetic voice is trying desperately to battle time, to defy its laws and its logic ('yo enlazaba cuatro noches'), but time is represented as an inescapable process causing agony and frustration. In his search for temporal evasion and suddenly breaking with temporal logic, the poet recalls past events, crystallised in the poem without a temporal resolution. In so doing, he dissects the beloved's body into sensory memories. This body is surveyed through its different parts, divided into fragmented pieces that relate to the poet's perception ('vientre', 'dientes', 'frente', 'cintura'). The purpose of the poet's attempt to shatter spatiotemporal logic is to put an end to temporal specificity—to stop and escape time—by giving eternity as a gift to his addressee. This aspect clearly resonates with the Petrarchan tradition and with Shakespearean sonnets in which the poet sees the poetic task as a guarantee of eternal life for the beloved.<sup>46</sup> Yet the poet becomes aware that, by writing down 'siempre', he has

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<sup>46</sup> Shakespeare's very well-known Sonnet 18 points to this idea: 'So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see, | So long lives this, and this gives life to thee' (1997: 18, ll. 13-14). It has been documented that Lorca knew Shakespeare's sonnets quite well (Fernández Montesinos 1988: 13-23), and he makes multiple references to works by the Bard throughout his entire production, from the juvenilia poetry to *El público*.

ironically condemned both himself and the beloved to the material laws of language and time, to the Lacanian symbolic order and its lethal inescapability. The poet's realisation that the addressee's body is 'eternally fugitive' seems to be the resolution (or further complication) of the conflict, prompting the present temporality of the final two lines:

la sangre de tus venas en mi boca,  
tu boca ya sin luz para mi muerte. (2010: 11, ll. 15-16)

The word 'siempre', repeated several times in the poem, situates the poet against the inevitability of temporality. He is seeking a state of eternity, a space outside time itself, in which he can attain an eternal union with his beloved ('Yo busqué, para darte, por mi pecho | las letras de marfil que dicen *siempre*', ll. 11-12). However, immediately after this statement the poet realises the impossibility of his desire ('*Siempre, siempre*: jardín de mi agonía, | tu cuerpo fugitivo para siempre', ll. 13-14), he realises it is but a fantasy. The fantasy of eternity he conjures would put an end to the fear of death and oblivion: he would like to exist forever and to be with the beloved forever. As Edelman points out: 'fantasy names the only place where desiring subjects can live', a place where the subject can not only 'exist for always', but also 'exist when others are no longer there. He wants to live longer than everyone else, and to *know* it; and when he is no longer there himself, his name must continue' (2004: 34). The body of the gacela's beloved and the poet's body, *qua* human bodies, are both inscribed in a finite spatial and temporal realm. They will not and cannot be eternal. Consequently, the beloved will always be fugitive, in constant mutation and unable to exist outside time and space. In other words, the poet's wish is set up to fail: he will never attain an immortal or immaterial state because human corporeality is by definition material and therefore, finite and perishable. In the course of the poem, this realisation is articulated as a return to the present time, asserting the poet's

acceptance of temporal specificity and, consequently, of human mortality ('tu boca ya sin luz para mi muerte', l. 16).

The return to the present time ('ya') does nonetheless signify the union of the two entities, which seemed impossible. The concluding lines suggest that complete temporal transcendence —and, therefore, stable and univocal meaning outside time— are unachievable, due to the 'chain of ceaseless deferrals and substitutions to which language as a system of differences necessarily gives birth' (Edelman 2004: 8). To escape time would imply escaping language as well, reaching a plane outside temporality and outside signification in which the fantasy of Being itself —what Lacan calls 'the Real' or 'the Thing'— could be realised. The break with temporality that the poet desired is thus denied by the necessary temporality of language and the ephemerality that comes with it.

If language is a temporal succession of endless deferrals in which true and absolute meaning can never be achieved and if that which language articulates is necessarily referring to something *other*, what chance does the poet have to ever grasp the beloved's elusive self? The poet's desire for the beloved is doomed. The attainment of the beloved, the fulfilment of the poet's desire cannot be realised except through the emergence of the death drive, that which is outside time, 'intractable, unassimilable to the logic of interpretation or the demands of meaning-production', carrying the 'destabilizing force of what insists outside or beyond, because foreclosed by, signification' (Edelman 2004: 9). The image of mortality at the end of the poem points to the death of the poet's fantasy: it unites the two lovers but this time it is a deadly union, the awareness of their necessary and inevitable demise. Death's emergence is signalled by a scene in which the poet drinks the addressee's blood and the temporal succession of the poem has inevitably run its linear course to the present time, mixing a grotesque vampiric/cannibalistic image with sexual connotations. The desired union of the poet and his beloved takes place

through blood and the act of eating: one body is appropriating another by orally consuming it. The proximity of the poet's mouth and the addressee's also evokes kissing or licking, a libidinal possession which is never explained or resolved in the poem due to the sudden appearance of death. This final scene represents the coalescence of desire and death, of Eros and Thanatos, a final denial of the possibility to either achieve a stable and immutable state transcending the incoherencies of gender identification (thus 'killing' the poet's desire to define and understand the beloved) and the insurmountable temporality of language (which kills the capacity of the poet to attain an eternal union with the beloved). However, the lack of a resolute synthesis of these two 'enemies' or 'lovers' in the poem —i.e. desire and death— suggests that the poem reaches an alternative, queer space. This space entails, as Muñoz posits, a 'queer time' which prompts 'a stepping out of the linearity of straight time' (2009: 25). While the time in the poem seems to be linearly moving forward from past to present, towards the end the poet manages to disrupt this linear time by blurring the temporal limits of death and life. The indeterminacy of the final lines (are the lovers dead or is the vampiric scene a glimpse of an orgasmic '*petite morte*'?) fails to announce the death of the poet's fantasy to annihilate time. The poet and his beloved face death, but their mutual union seems to engender life (like the beloved's indeterminate stomach engendered magnolias) and exude pleasure (the poet's mouth is after all literally placed next to the beloved's in the text). The lovers in the gacela are placed beyond these multiple incoherencies and thus figure the place of the queer. In this queer fantasy space in which death gives life and life means death, all norms and logic go to die.

In the 'Gacela V del niño muerto', a similar exploration of spatiotemporal limits takes place:

Todas las tardes en Granada,  
todas las tardes se muere un niño.  
Todas las tardes el agua se sienta  
a conversar con sus amigos.

Los muertos llevan alas de musgo.  
El viento nublado y el viento limpio  
son dos faisanes que vuelan por las torres  
y el día es un muchacho herido. (2010: 19, ll. 1-8)

Death is invoked in this poem as a commonplace phenomenon, accepted into the space of the living as an ordinary process. It is there every day, inscribed in the poet's space, in Granada. The Andalusian city and the dead body of a child are equated, brought together as if they were almost correlative realities, through the anaphoric structure 'todas las tardes'. 'Every afternoon' is repeated three times in the opening stanza, implying that the image of sunset is both the death of a day and of a child, the end of corporeality/existence and of innocence. However, the temporal succession is inverted in the poem, beginning with present events and then travelling back to the past from the third quatrain onwards.

The correlation of temporal processes and bodily processes evokes the poet's concern with temporal specificity in 'Gacela del amor imprevisto'. The bodies represented in this poem are also in a liminal state, in a mean between life and death, between time and eternity. A dying boy and a wounded young man are projections of the poetic voice onto a timeframe that resists to be specified but remains cyclical. Water and wind are articulated as analogous to life's progression towards death: in the first quatrain water sits down (stops flowing) as the child's death is happening; in the second quatrain the dead have mossy wings and are followed by two currents of wind identified as two

pheasants flying. This correlation is extended to the next two quatrains, in which images are intermixed to convey a similar analogy:

No quedaba en el aire ni una brizna de alondra  
 cuando yo te encontré por las grutas del vino.  
 No quedaba en la tierra ni una miga de nube  
 cuando te ahogabas por el río.

Un gigante de agua cayó sobre los montes  
 y el valle fue rodando con perros y con lirios.  
 Tu cuerpo, con la sombra violeta de mis manos,  
 era, muerto en la orilla, un arcángel de frío. (2010: 11, ll. 9-15)

The timeframe has now moved to the past. The poet recollects or imagines an encounter with the beloved in an wine cave underground, whilst the wind was gone so there were no larks flying in the air. Water and wind reappear transformed into wine and flying birds gone, followed by ‘crumbs of clouds’ absent from the earth and a river drowning the beloved. Death is invoked again, but this time the beloved’s dead body has replaced that of the child from the beginning: water once more flows as a giant rolling down the mountains amongst dogs and irises, but it stops again at the end as the poet sees the body of the beloved dead by the riverbank like a cold archangel.

Once more, the spatiotemporal and corporeal transformations fused in the poet’s discourse resist fixity, situating bodies, time and space on a liminal plane between life and death. The ambiguous sex, gender and identity marks of the bodies in the poem (‘niño’, ‘muchacho’, ‘tu cuerpo’, ‘un arcángel’) and their mutability, flowing like water and wind, queer them into odd and indeterminate entities so their only specificity lies in their mysterious and ominous nature and their abrupt precipitation towards death. They

become living bodies in the poem insofar as they are wounded ('un muchacho herido'), dying ('se muere un niño', 'te ahogabas') or already dead ('los muertos', 'tu cuerpo [...] muerto en la orilla'). They are opposed to the very logic of opposition which would make life and death mutually exclusive, since they inhabit an indeterminate space between both, a place 'beyond the distinctions of pleasure and pain, a violent passage beyond the bounds of identity, meaning, and law' (Edelman 2004: 26). By denying any possibility of logical temporal completion or ontological coherence, the poem evidences the necessity for the wound to stay open (since the events and characters in the *gacela* can only be articulated in relation to that wound) and thus for the queer to emerge as the marker of the intertwined Eros and Thanatos. As he disrupts linear time, the poet denies any possibility of future as the advent of meaning, proclaiming the wound —the transgression where life and death coalesce and where binaries cease to be opposed— as the access to what lies beyond meaning, i.e. that which is inexpressible and unnameable. Granada in this poem becomes the place of a queer time, in which children die every day and past and present get confusingly blurred.

In the second *gacela* in the collection, 'Gacela II de la terrible presencia', a further attempt to fracture spatiotemporal and logical limits occurs. The structure of the *gacela* consists entirely of couplets, which gives it a sense of speed and brevity but accentuates the individual images in each of the eight couplets as isolated events, which is also reinforced by the assonant rhyme patterns particular to each one (a/e, o/o, o/a, e/a, i/a, e/o, u/o, e/a). The creation of impossible or illogical images serves to explore the idea of an exceeding desire, uncontainable and incontrollable. The poet's desire is articulated into a series of impossible wishes that would break the laws of logic and physics. This leitmotif is expanded throughout the first part of the poem, reaching a conclusion before the two

final couplets, in which the poet addresses his beloved expressing his profound desire which must remain unfulfilled.

This is articulated through a succession of different stages in the *gacela*. The first four couplets elaborate on the poet's imaginative and creative capacities, listing his impossible wishes beyond reason and logic:

Yo quiero que el agua se quede sin cauce.  
Yo quiero que el viento se quede sin valles.

Quiero que la noche se quede sin ojos  
y mi corazón sin la flor del oro;

que los bueyes hablen con las grandes hojas  
y que la lombriz se muera de sombra;

que brillen los dientes de la calavera  
y los amarillos inunden la seda. (2010: 13, ll. 1-8)

The imagery refers mostly to the natural world, as illogical scenarios play out in the rapid succession of couplets. These scenarios tend to ascribe qualities to natural objects which somehow contradict their conventional or logical definitions. For instance, oxen are given the ability to speak and the night, which is given human eyes, gets blinded. Worms, which normally live underground, are killed by darkness and the ominous image of a skull is given sparkly shiny teeth. From these incongruous desires, the poet moves to a change of tone in couplets five and six. His use of the present tense ('Puedo ver', 'Resisto') signals his attempt to be more descriptive and engage with logic, so the metaphors subsequently become more coherent and decipherable. The battle of the wounded night against noon, the green poison from sunset and the broken arches where time suffers reveal the poet's



recurrent use of *chiaroscuro* and his plays of opposites to describe conflicting emotions and personal suffering. In this case, these emotional conflicts lead the poet to address his beloved:

Pero no ilumines tu limpio desnudo  
como un negro cactus abierto en los juncos. (2010: 13, ll. 13-14)

Whilst the rest of the poem has established the poet as a desiring being, he now consciously tries to set limits to his desire, which at this point is clearly erotic and carnal. The body of the beloved, reminiscent of that of the first *gacela* ('Del amor imprevisto'), is also indeterminate and lacks sex and gender markers. Its nakedness is clean but it is dark like a black cactus open by the river reeds. Its exuberance and appeal to the poet are mixed with its mystery and ambiguity, analogous to the conflicting emotions and overpowering desire the poetic voice felt in the previous couplets. What is most significant about this *gacela* is the use of vivid but complex and unexpected images inserted into a regular and fast-paced structure, which gives the poem an apparent simplicity and accentuates the series of conflicts proposed through the imagery and their lack of resolution or logical synthesis.

Fulfilment in the *gacela* would mean the end of the poet's life and the end of his discourse, so the poet endeavours to keep that desire open, to stay in a constant state of liminality, of in-betweenness ('Déjame en un ansia de oscuros planetas, | pero no me enseñes tu cintura fresca', 2010:13, ll. 15-16). The word 'ansia' retrospectively sheds some light on the title of the *gacela*. The terrible presence of the beloved provokes in the poet a state of eagerness, urge, impulse, longing. His desire is 'terrible' in that it is overpowering but also unsettling, producing anxiety and even fear. Desire is kept unfulfilled, on the edge of completion or realisation and thus on the brink of destruction.

It is a desire to keep desiring, which resonates with all the impossible wishes at the beginning of the poem. ‘Gacela de la terrible presencia’ contains a metapoetic statement on infinite linguistic and imagistic capabilities, although it also deems language an endless chain of meaning deferrals where meaning itself is nothing but elusive. Lorca’s thoughts in the *duende* lecture emerge from this idea. The location of *duende* in the constant baptism of newly-created things (*OC* III: 318), in the perpetual creation of the unprecedented, must come from an unquenchable desire, for desire’s wound is ever open to facilitate the experience of art. This wound, however, denies the possibility of any linear future in which that open space might be closed and in which fulfilment or an absolute and unchanging meaning might be achieved. It must also announce death as a result.

The liminal and indeterminate space situated between desire and death and between existence and destruction brings about an unsettling sense of disorientation but it simultaneously creates a site of infinite potentialities: ‘un ansia de oscuros planetas’. By suppressing the denouement of the lovers’ conflict, the poet offers the chance for the unarticulated resolution to become a sign liberated from any restrictions, able to be transformed and redefined in myriad ways. The lovers in the *gacela* can transcend time, sexual identities and gender differences and become fluid processes mutating *ad infinitum*. They inhabit a queer time characterised, as Edelman posits, by the endless deferral and difference —the *différance*— of the symbolic. This timeframe offers no possibility of a future to seal the wound open by desire: ‘like the lovers on Keats’s Grecian urn, forever “near the goal” of a union they’ll never in fact achieve, we’re held in thrall by a future continually deferred by time itself, constrained to pursue the dream of a day when today and tomorrow are one’ (2004: 30). Denying temporal linearity and futurity characterises Lorca’s *duende* and the queer, both of which announce the

imminence of death and the necessity for the open wound to represent it. Stepping outside time as a linear succession points to the infinite potentialities that the wound creates, so poetry becomes the path to creative eternity.

The final gacela in this section offers a somewhat different poetic approach to the recurrent spatiotemporal disruptions and sensory representations by re-appropriating the city of Granada and its folklore. These become ‘the everyday material that is represented in a different frame, laying bare its aesthetic dimension and the potentiality that it represents’ (Muñoz 2009: 9). From its start, ‘Gacela IV del amor que no se deja ver’ establishes a clear sensory distinction between sight and sound, but it plays with and reverses their values throughout the poem. The main premise introduced in the title speaks of a ‘love that cannot be seen’, while each of the main stanzas in the poem begins with the poet’s desire to hear a bell toll (specifically, ‘la campana de la Vela’).<sup>47</sup> The parallel structure ‘Solamente por oír | la campana de la Vela’ is repeated in the two first lines of the first, third and fifth stanzas, whilst the italicised second and fourth stanzas serve as choruses or repetitive chants. These choruses also present a parallel structure, beginning with the city of Granada and a simile that transforms it into a moon and a doe respectively. Interspersed with the main stanzas, they give a sense of traditional folkloric song, which in the context of *Diván del Tamarit* and the Arabic tradition it references, situate Granada and its Arabic influence in the midst of Lorca’s passionate love poem. As Pedrosa posits, the poem’s echoes of traditional songs and poems are seamlessly integrated into Lorca’s innovative efforts, which expand on the existing lines (well-known in Granada and Andalusia) and transform them to accommodate the poet’s longing and anguish (2012: 335).

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<sup>47</sup> According to Andalusian folklore and popular tradition, the bell atop the ‘Vela’ tower in the Alhambra was rung by young girls (and occasionally young men) of Granada every 2nd of January in the hope that it would bring them love and marriage within the year (see Pedrosa 2012: 330).

The parallelism occurring in the first two lines of each main stanza corresponds to actual lines from popular songs dedicated to the Vela Tower and its bell, staples of the Alhambra and the city of Granada (Pedrosa 2012: 331-333). However, the final lines of the first and third stanzas ('te puse una corona de verbena'; 'desgarré mi jardín de Cartagena'), while also partially echoing pre-existing poems and songs (they are taken from popular songs and nursery rhymes sung in Granada and used in other poems by Lorca),<sup>48</sup> introduce both the poetic voice and his addressee, thus anchoring the poem in the poet's reality and modifying the re-appropriated traditional language. In the final stanza, this modification becomes even more noticeable as Lorca introduces two new lines ('me abrasaba en tu cuerpo | sin saber de quién era', ll.13-14), thus transforming the tercet into a quatrain and departing from the borrowed poetic framework altogether. These additions consist of lines of different lengths from the 'recycled' lines, longer in the first and third stanzas and shorter in the last one. Their tone is also much less general and presents the poetic voice in a more intimate manner. The 'Vela' bell and its ritual associations with love, marriage and desire serve the poet to express his own desire for his beloved, whilst also suggesting its complex and unstable nature and therefore its resistance to adjust to the norms in which it has been inscribed.

In the first stanza, the poet speaks of his beloved, whom he has given a floral crown ('te puse una corona de verbena'). The poet's obsessive desire for his beloved is emphasised by the recurring longing for the bell's sound and in this stanza by the poet's idolisation and adornment of the beloved. 'Verbena' can refer to both a scented plant or to a traditional local celebration in Spanish culture, usually characterised by music,

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<sup>48</sup> In Lorca's early *Libro de poemas* (1921), 'Balada triste. Pequeño poema' includes the lines: 'Pasé por el jardín de Cartagena | la verbena invocando'; and his play *Mariana Pineda* (1925) contains the reference 'Soñar en la verbena y el jardín | de Cartagena, luminoso y fresco', both of which echo lines extracted from the oral tradition and nursery rhymes from Fuentevaqueros: 'Pasimisi, Pasimisi, | por la Puerta de Alcalá, | la de adelante corre mucho, | la de detrás se quedará. | Verbena, verbena, | jardín de Cartagena' (Pedrosa 2012: 335).

colourful ornaments and even costumes. The verbena flower has also been known in Spanish tradition to carry erotic connotations, such that the flower was believed to have invigorating and aphrodisiac qualities (Piñero 2008:17). Thus, the poetic voice idolises and transforms the beloved through a floral ornament which suggests their contact in some form of disguise, such that his love cannot be seen as the title claims but it can be heard like the bell and wears a colourful flowery crown worthy of a party or ‘verbena’. They both perform (the beloved even in costume) a queering process against the backdrop of Andalusian folkloric norms, imitating, in Butler’s sense, the sounds so characteristic of the songs sung there and the bell chimes evoked. Simultaneously, this imitation turns these norms on their head as it becomes evident that both the poem and the beloved’s identity are distorted and disguised, as difficult to see as the love in the title. Presenting the borrowed material ‘in a different frame’ (Muñoz 2009: 9), Lorca savours the imitation but exposes it as an inadequate frame, rewriting and adapting it to suit his unseen love.

Sound and also the smell of the ornamental flowers replace sight as the sensory key to the beloved, whose identity remains hidden from view and is disguised in uncertainty. This sense correlates with the final lines of the poem, in which the poet laments his burning desire for his beloved’s body without knowing to whom this body belongs. The poem ends with the uncertainty of the poet, which in turn clarifies his claim in the third stanza that his garden is torn (‘desgarré mi jardín de Cartagena’), the ambiguity of the line suggesting some sort of emotional and physical pain caused by the turmoil in the lovers’ relationship. ‘Tear’ is used to modify the trope of the Cartagena garden, borrowed from popular tradition but given in the poem an ambiguous value. Both lovers in the poem are made to inhabit a downtrodden space (that of Andalusian folklore and of the garden) but their performative duties do not quite fit within this framework and therefore they are progressively torn and disrupted (both figuratively as the poem

gradually departs from the recycled images and literally as the garden is destroyed) by the poet.

As for the italicised couplets or choruses (second and fourth stanzas), the focus moves from the poetic voice to a more general or omniscient voice, simulating a mysterious chant that underlines and simultaneously disrupts the main stanzas in the poem:

*Granada era una luna  
ahogada entre las yedras.  
[...] Granada era una corza  
rosa por las veletas. (ll 4-5; 9-10)*

Both these apparently simple couplets offer, however, complex and multi-layered metaphors to do with perception and perspective. With a parallel structure occurring in both couplets (*‘Granada era una...’*), the city is transformed into a moon and a doe and then personified/animalised (given the abilities to drown and to bleed). These transformed images are depicted in the throes of an impending death: the moon is drowning amidst the ivy and the doe has been pierced by lances and has turned pink from bleeding. Starting with the image of Granada, the moon which would inhabit the city’s sky is by metonymy transposed to encompass the former. Subsequently, what would be the moon’s reflection on the water is personified as a dying entity, so the initial visual perspective of the moon is decentred to create an anthropomorphic image of death. Conversely, the second couplet animalises Granada to evoke a further deadly image, but again it is through the visuality of the doe’s pink colour that this meaning is connoted. The word ‘veleta’, which also graphically and phonically resembles the Vela bell, is in itself ambiguous: it can denote a weathervane as well as a lance, so the visual image of Granada’s Alhambra and its pointy

towers (such as the Vela bell) is twisted to resemble pointy lances piercing an animal's skin. The sense of angst and suffering in these couplets is evoked and disguised by the ambiguity and brevity in which the imagery is depicted, conveying a sense of uncertainty and lack of completion. Only by exploring their sensory meanings and their reversed perspective can their connotations be accessed. The microstructure created in the couplets thus establishes a system of meaning deferrals, simultaneously producing a series of constructed images which nonetheless insist on their imminent destruction announced by the wound. The queerness of the images —their difference from the rest of the poem and their own decentred meaning which deviates from their conventional meaning— acquires a dual force which adds to the general meaning of the poem but aims to destroy it, presenting the wounded Granada as the sign of the death drive, that which ceases to be. What cannot be seen, what cannot be perceived in the gacela is paradoxically what the poem strives to convey through its images: an amalgamation of borrowed folkloric songs and tales, impulses stuck between desire and death, and the poet's own rewriting of them as an attempt to 'write' his beloved.

The Granada in the choruses is aligned with the poet from the main stanzas, in that the images attributed to it are also enveloped in a halo of ambiguity and mystery, such that it is hard to arrive at a definitive interpretation. It is as if the city is transposed into the poet's body, so that his feelings are felt by Granada itself, in turn personified repeatedly. The italicised couplets combined with the main ones accentuate the poet's burning desire for his beloved and his desperation stemming from his/her uncertainty and unattainable nature: unseen but heard, disguised and unknown. The beloved has no identity but possesses the ability to physically harm the poet ('desgarré', 'me abrasaba'), who in turn merges confusingly with the city and embodies it. The lovers' relationship is indeed 'a love that cannot be seen', as difficult to identify as the voices and folkloric

songs which Lorca reuses in the poem and as the chimes of the bell he desperately wants to hear. Thus space, time and the senses, systematically transgressed by the wound in the gacelas, give way to the impossible and the unintelligible: the emerging queer images that escape the wish of fulfilment and stability promised by the symbolic, a glimpse of which is made possible through Lorca's *duende*.

### **Casidas: Queer Selves and Others**

In *Diván del Tamarit*'s casidas, the poetic voice acquires a more detached and mysterious tone, often abandoning the first person and creating scenarios with other characters, as well as making use of free verse, irregular and asymmetrical structures and seemingly automatic writing. The first poem in this part of the collection, 'Casida primera del herido por el agua', is an apt example of irregular versification. Alternating seven-syllable, eleven-syllable and nine-syllable lines randomly, the poem's structure and syntax suggests the use of free verse more than a strict structural or rhyming pattern. Excluding the first and last stanzas, both formed of four almost identical lines, the body of the poem resembles prose in its use of varying line lengths and dissimilar structures and tones. The poetic voice, whilst present all throughout the poem, speaks obsessively about the boy wounded by water from the title, to the point that it becomes unclear where the boundaries between their identities lie.

As the poem begins, the poet situates the drowning boy as the other, a sympathetic character whose suffering he is contemplating and lamenting:

El niño herido gemía  
con una corona de escarcha.  
Estanques, aljibes y fuentes  
levantaban al aire sus espadas.  
¡Ay qué furia de amor, qué hiriente filo,



qué nocturno rumor, qué muerte blanca!  
 ¡Qué desiertos de luz iban hundiendo  
 los arenales de la madrugada! (2010: 35, ll. 5-12)

However, the tone of the poem blurs the distinction between the boy's pain and pleasure, contrasting words connoting ambivalent emotions. 'Herido' is followed by 'gemía' and 'corona de escarcha', both of which make it unclear whether the scene described connotes intense suffering and painful freezing or a pleasurable moaning with ecstasy and celebration. In addition, whilst the two following lines allude to the piercing swords emerging from every pond, well and fountain, the poet's exclamation further evokes the contrasting qualities of the boy's immersion in the water, intermixing love, fury and death; darkness and light; and wounding, piercing and the peacefulness of sleep.

The structure of the casida situates the deathly scene of the wounded boy drowning in the centre of the poem, whilst the first and last stanzas seem to be the poet's assertions and reflections on it. The oneiric scene interweaving pain, pleasure and dreams is presented as an interruption, a memory or a flashback, an abrupt change of scenery and tone. Therefore, there is an ambiguity relating to the identity of the wounded boy, his feelings and his body. Whilst the water is presented as a deadly agent, causing him pain and agony, the boy's physical responses connote both suffering and joy. In addition, the poet's sympathy and identification with him together with his desire to attain this ambivalent pleasurable death ('muerte blanca', 'quiero morir mi muerte a bocanadas') accentuate the mysterious qualities of this character. Barón Palma posits that the poet's feelings for the boy allude to the idea of loss and the mourning of the beloved after his [sic] death by water (1990). However, the boy's identity in the poem fluctuates between the poet's beloved and his own self, since the first and last stanzas and their more

prominent first person state a firm desire (evident in the anaphoric repetition of the verb ‘quiero’) to contemplate, empathise with, and ultimately merge with, the boy’s state:

Quiero bajar al pozo,  
quiero morir mi muerte a bocanadas,  
quiero llenar mi corazón de musgo,  
para ver al herido por el agua. (2010: 36, ll. 21-24)

The conclusion of the poem thus manifests the poet’s desire to fully experience the boy’s liminal state between life and death, equating his own demise with the most intense experience of simultaneous joy and pleasure. Only in the wound, representing his intense and overwhelming love (¡Ay qué furia de amor!) and his poignantly beautiful call for death (‘quiero morir mi muerte a bocanadas’) can the poet experience plenitude, but this is a plenitude that escapes signification and denies the possibility of fulfilment. This wound, as Lorca explains, ‘se acerca a los sitios donde las formas se funden en un anhelo superior a sus expresiones visibles’ (*OC* III: 310). Reaching for a place in which forms — that is, language and signification— wish to transcend and surpass their very capabilities of expression, they blur into one another and cease to signify. This fantasy place is a *jouissance* in the Lacanian sense, the promise of wholeness and completion which can never be fully achieved because it would imply succumbing to the death drive and the impossibility of moving beyond meaning and the symbolic order, beyond time and beyond mortality itself. It is a place of liminality, which Muñoz refers to as the utopia of queer time: ‘a stepping out of the linearity of straight time’ (2009: 25) and therefore the fantasy of a place outside the finitude of life and death.

The poet not only blurs temporal linearity and the significations of life and death, but also distorts the senses and perception. The ‘Casida II del llanto’ presents an irregular

but symmetric structure, consisting of two four-line stanzas with a shorter three-line stanza between them, and a variety of line lengths (seven, nine, eleven and fourteen-syllable lines). Sound and the sense of hearing are prominent in the imagery of the casida, where the qualities and nature of crying are explored in relation to the poet's perception. The poetic voice tries to repress the free-flowing sound and the pain that this cry provokes, but its irrepressible power overwhelms him to the point that it invades the poem as an unstoppable and indestructible force ('y no se oye otra cosa que el llanto').

Whilst the first stanza sees the poet closing his balcony and erecting grey walls to shun the cry away from him, the second and third stanzas concentrate on the sound of the cry itself and its overpowering intensity:

Hay muy pocos ángeles que canten,  
 hay muy pocos perros que ladren,  
 mil violines caben en la palma de mi mano.

Pero el llanto es un perro inmenso,  
 el llanto es un ángel inmenso,  
 el llanto es un violín inmenso  
 las lágrimas amordazan al viento,  
 y no se oye otra cosa que el llanto. (2010: 37, ll. 5-12)

The sound of the cry is thus compared with, and then surpassed by, the sound of angels singing, dogs barking and violins playing. With the use of parallel structures in both stanzas, these three elements are confronted with the sound of the cry, but the cataphoric repetition of the word 'inmenso' questions this very comparison by the poet, whose efforts to repress the cry have been in vain. The final two lines thus confirm that sound has dominated the poem's space and the poet's senses: from the previous similes the poet

moves to a complex but meaningful and synaesthetic metaphor in which tears have gagged the wind, expressing in visual terms how the cry has dominated the airspace and how it is inevitably the only thing that can be heard in the final line.

The development of the poem's imagery touches upon the transformative nature of *duende*, as it moves from the poet's inner self to his eventual succumbing to the sensory power of sound and his consequent abandonment of any signs of identity and certainty. Evoking the synaesthetic treatment of sound in the 'Gacela del amor que no se deja ver' and its tolling bell, the casida attributes a malleable aspect to the senses which tries to challenge their reliability as signifiers of meaning. The poet's suffering and detachment stem from his mistrusting sensory experience of reality. He is veiled in mystery and uncertainty, so the only possible reassurance for the poet lies in the sensory power conferred to the images he has created. Paradoxically, their queerness makes them highly unreliable as well. Their undefinable and unfixable nature ends up drowning the poet's sense-making efforts, just as the powerful sound of the cry drowns all the other senses.

'Casida VII de la rosa', albeit short, is one of the most complex and idiosyncratic of Lorca's late poems. With a very regular structure and rhyme scheme (abca, adea, aafa) and a parallel line organisation conferring to it a repetitive and almost naïve or simplistic musicality, it explores and develops the idea of desire and its transgression of the limits between self and other. The rose motif is explored in depth in Lorca's contemporary play *Doña Rosita la soltera o El lenguaje de las flores* (1935), in which the image of the *rosa mutabilis* is used to mirror the burning and overpowering desire of the protagonist, aptly named Doña Rosita.<sup>49</sup> The rose in the casida, in parallel with its theatrical counterpart but

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<sup>49</sup> Cate-Arries (1992) draws on Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* to examine the language of desire and repression that underscores Lorca's play and its use of flowers to channel the characters' psychic pulsions.

without changing colour, is characterised by its mutability. It is the most prominent entity in the poem, personified by the poetic voice. The rose's desire, anti-normative and subversive, is the *leitmotif* of the poem ('buscaba') and situates the rose as a challenge to stabilising notions of essence, corporeality and self-identification:

La rosa,  
no buscaba la aurora:  
casi eterna en su ramo,  
buscaba otra cosa.

La rosa,  
no buscaba ni ciencia ni sombra:  
confín de carne y sueño,  
buscaba otra cosa.

La rosa,  
no buscaba la rosa:  
inmóvil por el cielo  
buscaba otra cosa. (2010: 47)

In the first stanza, the rose is dissociated from light and ascribed the capacity to desire. However, this desire is established as non-normative. Due to the conventions usually associated with plants and flowers, dawn connotes not only light but also the natural beginning of days and the sunlight necessary for plants to grow and survive. By contrast, the rose in the poem is seen as a creature of darkness which does not search for the light of dawn and lives at night or in the shadows. This particular rose is almost eternal in its bunch, so expanding on its rejection of light and therefore of life as it is conventionally conceived, the rose also stands out from its flowery peers and transcends traditional ideas of mortality and time limitations. Its desire is just not containable within spatiotemporal

boundaries, it remains other ('buscaba otra cosa') and therefore disembodied, limitless, unarticulated and unknown. This resonates with the suggested obscurity ascribed to the rose, although interestingly, obscurity itself is not articulated in the poem but is evoked by opposition to dawn and to certainty of knowledge. What is unknown and unsaid, what lies in the dark, gains more prominence and significance in the poem than what is actually articulated. The rose is positioned against articulation itself, it remains other to the system of signification, continually deferring meaning and differing from it.

The rose further transcends epistemological boundaries in that it does not search for science or shadow, but remains on the edge of flesh and dream. This mix of bodily limits and materiality with immateriality, dream and the imaginary, complicate the nature of the rose. The poet denies the possibility of scientific knowledge of the rose and therefore its contention within corporeal limits. The rose eludes the rationalisation of science as it eludes the materiality of sensory perception: it cannot be seen in sunlight or shadow, and it cannot be perceived by the senses. Its corporeality is also questioned, such that it results in a mixture of body and the imaginary ('confín de carne y sueño'), an unlikely amalgamation of diverse fragments. This is confirmed in the final stanza, in which it is claimed that the rose's desire transcends its very being and searches for something other than itself ('buscaba otra cosa').

Echoing or perhaps challenging the infamous dictum by Gertrude Stein that 'Rose is a rose is a rose'<sup>50</sup> in the casida's notably repetitive tone, the poet suggests a metamorphic vision of essence whereby the rose's unquenched desire makes it ontologically permeable and fluid, perpetually other to itself and to knowledge, never

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<sup>50</sup> While Stein's tautological image has often been said to symbolise the immutable nature of essence, it is also plausible to relate her fragmentary and syntactically incongruous and abstract prose style to the flouting of normativity, 'in ways that break laws (of grammar) and challenge conventions, often with sexual connotations' (Reed 2011: 126-127), similarly to Lorca's rose in 'Casida de la rosa'.

epistemologically fulfilled or articulated. Lorca's rose breaks the boundaries that render identity stable and rationally understood, positivising mutability and multiplicity and their threat to signification. Things that defy the norms we are accustomed to may seem daunting or unintelligible at first, but in the rose's fantasy, a pervasive unquenched desire (a never-ending search for the unknown) bestows on the rose and on the poet infinite regenerating capabilities. This desire is a utopia, as Muñoz calls it, a queerness that is not yet here but which strives to show itself, to emerge through the edges of the wound it has open by breaking the norms intent on categorising it.

Much like the 'Casida de la rosa', the 'Casida IX de las palomas oscuras' explores the limits of identity and the permeability of self and other. It presents an allegorical tone in its running parable-like story and a rhyme scheme and naïve musicality reminiscent of nursery rhymes or folkloric songs, as well as some ballads in *Romancero gitano*.<sup>51</sup> In a play of opposites, a very recurrent motif in Lorca's late poetry, the two protagonist dark doves are identified with the sun and the moon. This overarching *chiaroscuro* establishes the poet's tone of existential enquiry and his belief in the permeability and fluidity of bodies and identities. As an agent of interrogation, the poetic voice initiates a dialogue with the two dark doves and their solar and lunar counterparts to enquire about his own existence:

Por las ramas del laurel  
vi dos palomas oscuras.  
La una era el sol,

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<sup>51</sup> La luna vino a la fragua  
con su polisón de nardos.  
El niño la mira, mira.  
El niño la está mirando. ('Romance de la luna, luna', *Romancero Gitano*, OC I: 393).

Pero yo ya no soy yo.  
Ni mi casa es ya mi casa. ('Romance sonámbulo', *Romancero Gitano*, OC I: 402).

la otra la luna.  
 “Vecinitas”, les dije,  
 “¿dónde está mi sepultura?”  
 “En mi cola”, dijo el sol.  
 “En mi garganta”, dijo la luna. (2010: 51, ll. 1-8)

The poet’s intention to clarify his existential position seems to be thwarted by the ambiguity and incongruity of the imagery, never resolving the polarisation between light and darkness or life and death. Conversely, the distinction between self and other is blurred:

Por las ramas del laurel  
 vi dos palomas desnudas.  
 La una era la otra  
 y las dos eran ninguna. (2010: 51, ll. 19-22)

The allusion to a naked woman seen by the poet and the transposition of this image into the final lines connects corporeality with the doves, with the poet himself and with the discussion about the limits of existence and identity. This embodiment is paired with the realisation that the permeability of the images in the poem mirrors that of the poet’s identity and his liminal state between existence and non-existence. The nakedness of the doves and that of the woman suggest the removal of all external signs of identity, such as gender and chromosomal sex. These are superseded by the power of desire merging self and other (‘la una era la otra’) and the imminent threat of mortality and non-existence (‘la muchacha era ninguna’, ‘las dos eran ninguna’), suggesting that those signs have no meaning in the face of death. The final lines of the poem thus merge the identities of all the characters and the poet witnessing them, blurring the apparent distinctions differentiating them in a fantasy vision of desire and mortality.



Both the ‘Casida de la rosa’ and the ‘Casida de las palomas oscuras’ hinge on an apparently simplistic and naïve structure to explore the poet’s uncertain position between existence and non-existence, being and non-being. The linguistic and poetic transitional signs from self to other are simplified to acquire an almost playful and tautological quality (‘la rosa no buscaba la rosa’, ‘la una era la otra | y las dos eran ninguna’), whilst actually proposing subversive images challenging the fixity of the body and identity and redefining the idea of death as an unequivocal end to existence. Lorca’s poetic use of death is undoubtedly polysemic: it simultaneously points to the universality of the fear of mortality and the threat of loss and grief; to the artistic *pathos* achieved when a living being is faced with physical pain and suffering; to the negation of language and thought as reliable and univocal signifying systems; and, therefore, to the act of questioning faithful meaning and representation. The latter is evident in both poems’ abundant use of indeterminate nouns and pronouns denoting uncertainty, otherness and non-existence (‘otra cosa’, ‘la otra’, ‘ninguna’), creating a discourse which poses a threat to communication and interpretation. In doing so, the unreliability of these does nonetheless leave room for potentially infinite readings and possibilities, which ascribes a sense of freedom and a purposeful rejection of normativity to poetry far more liberating than nihilistic or pessimistic. Muñoz insists that queerness is a utopia, an ideality, but ‘we can feel it as the warm illumination of a horizon imbued with potentiality’ (2009: 1). While Lorca’s casidas create queer fantasies escaping temporality and threatening the certainty of life and death, their infinite potentialities as utopias shine through. The cyclical and recurrent performativity of *duende* thwarts any attempt to impose logical norms on or delimit existence, identity or desire. Transgressing straight time and futurity, self-other distinctions, and the stability of identities, the queer fantasy emerging from *duende*’s wound fittingly erases limits only to recreate them, refuting any hope of fulfilment but

always promising new horizons that are yet to come. Together with the gacelas and the casidas of *Diván del Tamarit*, this kept promise is channelled further through the love sonnet in Lorca's final poetic project.

### ***Sonetos del amor oscuro: Queering the Sonnet Tradition***

Lorca's thematic preferences and recurrent motifs —the confluence of Eros and Thanatos, the natural world, corporeal deconstruction—, and his plays of opposites also find a prominent place in his final poetic cycle, *Sonetos del amor oscuro*. The sonnets' intimate tone is paired with innovative imagery that divests traditional tropes of their conventional associations while adhering to the canons and long-standing tradition of this poetic form. The most transgressive aspects of *Sonetos del amor oscuro* are Lorca's exploration of the metamorphic nature of desire and death from an avant-garde standpoint, and the redefinition of the love sonnet to accommodate the questioning of normativity in relation to gender and sexual identities.

Significantly, the positivising of darkness and its opposition to light so often present in *Diván del Tamarit* is found in the very title of the sonnet cycle. The titular image 'Amor oscuro', translatable as 'dark' or 'obscure' love, announces the wish of the poet to subvert the conventional and alludes to the duelling forces of desire and mortality within the human body. While 'dark' has been the usual choice of scholars, I propose 'obscure' as the better option in this case, since this term opens up more possibilities to analyse the mysterious, inarticulable and norm-transgressing qualities of desire explored in the collection from the perspectives of queer theory and *duende*. A number of Lorca scholars have read this 'obscure love' as a synonym for homosexual love. Many agree that 'it is impossible to approach his texts without acknowledging his person, and it is almost an article of faith amongst critics that in Lorca literature and life are one' (Smith

1989: 107). Issues of Lorca's biography have been alluded to or even imposed on analyses and interpretations of his texts, especially those referring to his sexual orientation and the particular circumstances of his death.<sup>52</sup> However, while a biographical approach is perfectly feasible if the purpose is to elucidate details of Lorca's relationships and life experiences in relation to his social and historical context, in this study the poet's work will be prioritised over his life, since the nuances and ambiguity so characteristic of Lorca's sonnets and his poetry in general usually go against univocal interpretations and therefore give a sense of polysemy and ambivalence that should be taken into account. The indeterminate and ambivalent nature of Lorca's love sonnets, questioning norms of gender and sexual identity and the reliability of language to produce stable meaning, seems to be more accurately described by the precisely non-descriptive, vague connotations of 'obscure'.

It is nonetheless relevant to notice the only overtly articulated, if unsurprisingly ambiguous, reference to the beloved as male in *Sonetos del amor oscuro*, which occurs in 'El amor duerme en el pecho del poeta':

Tú nunca entenderás lo que te quiero  
 porque duermes en mí y estás *dormido*.  
 Yo te oculto llorando, perseguido  
 por una voz de penetrante acero. (2010: 73, ll. 1-4) [my italics]

The fact that the word 'amor' refers ambiguously to both the beloved and the general idea of love complicates the poet's exploration of his tumultuous relationship, interspersed

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<sup>52</sup> The title of the sonnet cycle also caused controversy around the time *Sonetos* was published: 'The length at which the title was discussed suggests that it has been to some extent responsible for the delay in publication of these sonnets; the title in question would seem to imply that Federico had written a book of homosexual love sonnets, or even worse in its impact, first-person sonnets which envisioned homosexual love as an equally valid type of love' (Eisenberg 1988: 263). Francisco García Lorca insisted that the sonnets be published as *Sonetos* or *Sonetos de amor*, whereas Eisenberg sustains the validity of the current title judging from first-hand accounts by friends of Lorca's and contemporary artists.

with secrecy, pain and the beloved's apparent disdain or lack of understanding of the poet's feelings, symbolised in the recurrent allusions to sleep. This could be analysed as an example of the secret nature of homosexual relationships in Lorca's time and indeed of the difficulties of ascribing univocal terms to issues of sexuality and sexual orientation.

While the argument that the sonnets were Lorca's *cri de coeur* to unveil (to those in the know) and encode (to everybody else) his homosexual frustration has been adopted by many (Binding 1985; Kramer 2008), there is reason to believe in an alternative more pluralistic analysis, related mainly to Lorca's reconfiguration of desire and the body to adapt to a more fluid vision. As Leuci argues in her reading of 'oscuridad' in the sonnets:

esta parece una entrada atractiva a un mundo atravesado por la oposición luz/sombra o claro/oscuro, una dicotomía que se desplegará en los textos lorquianos en un espectro de variadas gradaciones, en referencia, por ejemplo, a la oscuridad de lo no-dicho, lo secreto, lo velado, pero también, aludiendo a la noche como escenario e, incluso, llegando a la oscuridad abismal e intensa de la muerte o del alma y la carne del propio ser. (2008: 1)

Obscurity in *Sonetos* acquires a plurality of meanings, not being limited to its association with secrecy and the unknown, but rather suggesting an addition to that meaning in its connotations of contrasting forces and opposed dichotomies within the bodies and objects in the poems.

Lorca's entire poetic production and indeed his late poetry are characterised by the preference for polysemic and evocative images prone to multiple interpretations rather than 'transparent' or clearly referential poems. It is indeed quite possible to speak of a queer poetics *avant la lettre* regarding Lorca's sonnets, but in the same way that the term queer cannot be reduced to the identification of homosexual themes and LGBTQ identities in texts, it is important to open the interpretation of Lorca's poetry to other

aspects and ideas encompassed by queer theories. The importance of queerness in the sonnets relates to their eradication or contestation of conventional ideas of sex and gender and their subversion of traditional lyrical motifs stemming from the sonnet tradition, whilst simultaneously honouring this canonical poetic form's aesthetic value and its rich expressive and emotional charge. Lorca elaborates on, and often disrupts, the obsolete and overused canons of love ingrained in his knowledge of traditional sonnets to add an element of obscurity as queer and mysterious as that of his most avant-garde compositions.

### ***Chiaroscuro and Painful Pleasures***

One of the sonnets which stands out for its prominent *chiaroscuro* imagery as an echo of the collection's title is the last one, 'Noche del amor insomne'. In this sonnet, night and day appear as the scenarios in which the lovers can interrelate. However, spatiotemporal uncertainties abound as do pairs of opposites which destabilise the meanings of images. Through the title of the poem the nightly scenario is set, but the tumultuous relationship represented in the sonnet is announced by the word 'insomne'. The night in the poem is a sleepless night, which already suggests a plurality of meanings: the lovers are kept awake either by the enjoyment of erotic pleasures or by suffering in painful angst and desperation. The transition from night to day demarcates the lovers' sexual encounter, but boundaries between pain and joy become unstable and reversible, imitating the equally unstable flux between light and darkness:

Noche arriba los dos con luna llena,  
yo me puse a llorar y tú reías.  
Tu desdén era un dios, las quejas más  
momentos y palomas en cadena.

Noche abajo los dos. Cristal de pena,  
 llorabas tú por hondas lejanías.  
 Mi dolor era un grupo de agonías  
 sobre tu débil corazón de arena.

La aurora nos unió sobre la cama,  
 las bocas puestas sobre el chorro helado  
 de una sangre sin fin que se derrama.

Y el sol entró por el balcón cerrado  
 y el coral de la vida abrió su rama  
 sobre mi corazón amortajado. (2010: 75)

As the corporeal and emotional instability of the lovers transitions from desire to pain, so do the images in which they are inscribed, mutating from darkness to light and upwards to downwards. The first quatrain is situated in an upwards movement, which is reinforced by the image of a full moon in the sky. The poet is crying and the beloved is laughing, their bodies moving in space and in time ('momentos y palomas en cadena'), gravitating towards each other and fluctuating between pleasure and pain, until the boundaries between these states become blurred and reversible during their erotic encounter. In the second quatrain, the movement of the night downwards presents the beloved crying this time, following the enjambement with the previous line in which there is a glass of sadness. The hard surface of glass and its reflective qualities are positioned against the emotional suffering of the beloved, mirroring the poet's agony in the next line and contrasting the weakness attributed to the beloved's heart of sand. The quatrain thus evokes the contrast between hard and soft objects and the intermittent feelings of the lovers across time and space ('momentos', 'arriba', 'abajo', 'hondas lejanías', 'grupo de agonías'). Space and time are destabilised, as are the positions of the lovers in relation to

each other: now close, now far, now upwards, now downwards, now laughing, now crying, now night, now day.

Dawn loses its conventionally positive associations of light and rebirth and instead sees the lovers drinking each other's blood, which in turn becomes a jet stream that never ceases, an indissoluble union of pleasure and mortality. The appropriation of each other's bodies points to mutual pleasure but also to a mutual infliction of pain. The lovers feed off each other's blood like vampires, the immensity of the never-ending blood stream symbolising mutual nurturing and redemption; however, this unsettling image reinforces the cries and agonies scattered throughout the poem and the pain this relationship imposes on the lovers. Even the temporal process of death is destabilised, since the continuous bleeding does not have an end and has therefore stopped the logical succession of events. In turn, the coral of life opens up as sunlight enters the bedroom through the closed balcony to find the poet's heart shrouded for his funeral.

The two tercets thus combine purposely ambiguous scenarios which fail to explicate the state of the lovers. Dawn, sunlight and coral attempt to counteract their bloody and deathly encounter; but the poet's shrouded heart can be either redeemed or killed by them, as the end of the sonnet suspends the possibility of resolution to this conflict. Blood is here the principle by which life and death cease to be distinct processes, instead becoming a dual force that drives the desiring bodies of the lovers and blurs their sense of self and other as well as their concrete state in their relationship. As Blackman posits,

bodies are not considered stable things or entities, but rather are processes which extend into and are immersed in worlds. That is, rather than talk of bodies, we might instead talk of brain-body-world entanglements, and where, how and

whether we should attempt to draw boundaries between the human and non-human, self and other, material and immaterial. (2012: 1)

These entanglements are thus articulated in the sonnet to encompass the lovers' tumultuous love relationship and their physical and emotional communion as well as the more general ontological process of self-identification, which Lorca weaves as a multiplicity of aspects interrelating. In parallel, whether the lovers' bodies are male or female is unclear, but what seems crucial for the poetic voice is the excessive desire that drives them, and the capacity of the poem to convey the convoluted and unstable relationship between time and space, pleasure and pain, life and death and the lovers' bodily texture and composition. Their bodies offer an entrance into a world of reversibility, in which sex and gender are superseded—and therefore questioned—through the fluidity they can both acquire in their relationship. The lovers' communion occurs at the physical level, but the poet insists that their carnal encounter entails many entangled aspects relating also to their psyche and experience of reality (brain-body-world), such that their multi-layered identities merge. This holistic union, in interweaving Eros and Thanatos, body and soul, and self and other, thus attempts to render other binaries (especially those normativising sex and gender) obsolete and irrelevant.

A similar exploration of the entanglement of self and other, pleasure and pain and life and death takes place in the first sonnet in the collection, entitled 'Soneto de la guirnalda de rosas'. The title of the poem introduces an element which fuses evocations of both love and death and becomes integral to the sonnet, but its function is highly ambivalent. The 'guirnalda de rosas' can be taken to mean both a garland and a funerary wreath. A garland of roses bears love associations, being an ornament of celebration of the passion evoked by the flower. However, a wreath is used to commemorate death, in which case the roses would give a sense of danger and suffering, perhaps to do with their



thorns that may cause pain and therefore suggesting an end to love or its painful consequences. These opposed sentiments are explored throughout the poem, suggesting that ‘the experience of love is a mingling, an interweaving of disparate emotions and states, just as love could here be seen as producing by turns singing and moaning’ (Anderson 1990: 312):

¡Esa guirnalda! ¡pronto! ¡que me muero!  
 ¡Teje deprisa! ¡canta! ¡gime! ¡canta!  
 Que la sombra me enturbia la garganta  
 y otra vez viene y mil la luz de Enero. (2010: 55, ll.1-4)

There is a confluence of lamentation and rejoicing simultaneous with the confluence of love (and life) with death, exposing the fluidity between loss or destruction and rebirth. The first quatrain produces an amalgam of opposing elements that coincides with the supposed weaving of the garland/wreath. The poet is urging the beloved to weave it fast, as he apparently sees the garland as an object that is going to bring both salvation and destruction, so urgency is required. The first two lines in the quatrain contain a series of exclamations which contribute to this sense of urgency and desperation on the part of the poet. The end of line one (‘¡que me muero!’) suggests that the garland could be either the remedy to the poet’s death or its very cause, placing the poet in a state of suffering or ecstasy derived from the beloved’s presence. The second part of the quatrain further explains the poet’s emotional state, making use of contrasting sensorial elements as is quite characteristic in the rest of the sonnet cycle and in *Diván del Tamarit*. ‘Sombra’, which inevitably suggests the idea of ‘amor oscuro’ associated with the sonnet group, is presented together with ‘luz’ to establish the interrelated emotions ailing the poet. This visual *chiaroscuro* is suggesting that the poet’s state of simultaneous suffering and joy is

linked to the passing of time and works in a cyclical fashion, as implied by the enjambement between lines three and four sequencing shadow and light and by the repetition expressed in the words ‘y otra vez viene y mil’. The continuous cycle of light and obscurity hints at the site of spatiotemporal non-linearity and logical uncertainty which the lovers inhabit.

A further pair of elements converging in disparity are the poet's first person and the beloved, or rather, their distinct experiences of love. Anderson claims that ‘enjoyment and violent destructiveness seem to go hand in hand’ (1990: 318) but ‘the poet still maintains a sort of desperate hope for ‘communion’ with the beloved despite or perhaps even thanks to all the suffering and the deathliness’ (1990: 319). The second quatrain exemplifies the mutability of the lovers’ relationship:

Entre lo que me quieres y te quiero,  
aire de estrellas y temblor de planta,  
espesura de anémonas levanta  
con oscuro gemir un año entero. (2010: 55, ll. 5-8)

While both lovers are ironically interwoven like the ornament, and thus showing reciprocal love (‘lo que me quieres y te quiero’), there seem to be a number of obstacles or factors which in the quatrain are literally positioned between them. These elements present a disparity of connotations related to the natural world especially. The viscosity of the quatrain thus transposes the conflicting emotions of the lovers into spatial perils (air of stars, tremor of plant and thickness of anemones all convey a sense of unsurmountable difficulties facing the lovers) and also temporal obstacles (a whole year of dark moans has passed or will pass). These confluences of opposing elements devolve into a new sense of

urgency in the tercets, in which the poet again demands that the beloved give into carnal desire and joy, although this joy is as usual tinted with ambivalent tones:

Goza el fresco paisaje de mi herida,  
 quiebra juncos y arroyos delicados,  
 bebe en muslo de miel sangre vertida.

Pero ¡pronto! Que unidos, enlazados,  
 boca rota de amor y alma mordida,  
 el tiempo nos encuentre destrozados. (2010: 55, ll. 9-14)

The poet takes on a domineering role in this sonnet, in contrast with the subjugation often seen in the sonnet cycle. He is the one commanding the beloved in order to avoid the catastrophe he is expecting: both lovers' imminent death. However, the fear of death announced at the beginning of the poem is transformed into the transience of time in the last tercet, therefore making it inevitable. The poet's suggestion of *carpe diem* to his beloved intertwines their desire with the experience of pain, an almost sadomasochistic depiction of their physical and emotional relationship. This is clearly reinforced by the grotesque imagery of the tercets: the beloved's joy in contemplating the poet's wounds, the destruction of the natural world and again the beloved drinking blood off the poet's honey thigh. The lovers' corporeal communion ('unidos, enlazados') presents an ambivalence between overwhelming pleasure and excruciating pain ('boca rota de amor'), against an enemy well-known to the poet (temporality and transience). This battle is nonetheless left unresolved as usual, so the *pathos* and disorientation sought by the poet remain crystallised fittingly as a cyclical garland or wreath.

The title of the second sonnet of obscure love is similarly suitable in relation to Lorca's recurrent play of opposites: 'Soneto de la dulce queja'. The oxymoron employed

is an introductory element of the ambivalent emotions experienced by the poet. His 'sweet complaint' announces the contradictory feelings that his relationship with the beloved cause in him and his adoption of a sadomasochistic role in their relationship. His moaning and dissatisfaction are in contrast with his unflinching desire for his beloved, whom he urges to not leave him and to continue exerting the sort of domination and painful fascination the poet has been used to receiving:

Tengo miedo a perder la maravilla  
de tus ojos de estatua y el acento  
que me pone de noche en la mejilla  
la solitaria rosa de tu aliento.

Tengo pena de ser en esta orilla  
tronco sin ramas, y lo que más siento  
es no tener la flor, pulpa o arcilla,  
para el gusano de mi sufrimiento.

Si tú eres el tesoro oculto mío,  
si eres mi cruz y mi dolor mojado,  
si soy el perro de tu señorío,

no me dejes perder lo que he ganado  
y decora las aguas de tu río  
con hojas de mi Otoño enajenado. (2010: 57)

The first quatrain presents the poet praising the beloved's features most precious to him, his/her eyes and breath, which he is terribly afraid of losing were their relationship to end. However, these corporeal elements suffer transmutations that point to the intricate interrelations between the lovers. The beloved's eyes are those of a statue, suggesting

their immense beauty comparable to an artistic form but also their inanimate or distant nature when looking back at the poet. The breath, on the contrary, is transformed metaphorically into a solitary rose, which at night touches (by speaking or breathing) the poet's cheek. The lovers' relationship may be reciprocal, or at least it is suggested that it has had some duration, since the poet is able to recall their physical contact as a habitual experience. However, what is troubling the poet is the fear of loss that the beloved's inaccessibility causes, either by his/her distant behaviour or his/her overwhelming beauty; and, as the poem later suggests, the very subjection of the lovers to the unstoppable passing of time and to the imminence of death.

The second quatrain delves deeper into the poet's psyche as he explains further the cause of his suffering. His transmutation into a branchless tree trunk and his lack of flowers, fruit pulp and clay are both stopping him from alleviating his pain, equated with a worm or maggot. This last image, a parasite and a sign of decay, also has significant metamorphic connotations, since 'gusano' evokes both the transformation of living organisms into inorganic matter and the metamorphosis of caterpillars into butterflies. These opposing processes of transmutation combine with the previous natural imagery in the quatrain—a riverbank, a tree trunk without branches, a flower, the pulp of a fruit and clay—to suggest the process of metamorphosis in Nature that temporal transience brings about and its inherent creative and destructive powers. A tree's growth is evident in its expansion into branches and roots, as well as in its cyclical production of flowers and fruits, a process similar to the moulding of clay into different forms (which relates to the artistic creative process introduced by the statue reference earlier and the Christian myth of human creation in which God created human beings out of clay) in its generation of a new being by transformation. 'Pena', 'siento' and 'sufrimiento' connect the second quatrain with the uncertainty and anxiety in the first one, and therefore place the poet in a

position of perceived inferiority in the face of the beloved. He considers himself to be at a disadvantage, since he lacks qualities that he has previously admired in his beloved. The beloved's 'statue eyes' and 'rosy breath' that he finds wonderful, whilst they may be a sign of coldness, falsity or lack of emotional reciprocity on the part of the beloved, also intimate an artistic or creative capacity that the poet himself lacks (he has no branches, flowers, fruits or clay and is stranded on a different riverbank). The poet is a queer creature in opposition to his beloved, which seems to be the cause of either the beloved's disdain or his/her attraction to the poet. In any case, it is perceived as an unequal relationship by the poet, an idea which is strengthened in the tercets through the recurrence of the river and tree metaphors.

The poet's fears are signs that their love affair is, or has been at some point, reciprocated but is nonetheless fragile or perhaps clandestine, since the poet suggests his uncertainties are causing him suffering. The poet adopts a submissive yet sadomasochistic role in the first tercet, but the anaphoric conditional structure of the three lines serve him to retaliate in the final tercet, introducing the crux of the sonnet, which is his request or command that the beloved let him keep being intimate with him/her. The adjective 'oculto' in line nine and the 'master-dog' relationship in line eleven corroborate the secrecy and lack of reciprocity perceived by the poet. The beloved is the poet's 'hidden treasure', his 'cross' and his 'wet pain', and he, in turn, is a dog to the beloved as a 'master'.

These opposing images mirror the oxymoron from the title, suggesting that however unequal or abusive their relationship might be to the poet, he still finds pleasure in their relationship and wants it to continue. His hypothetical lines 'si tú eres', 'si eres' and 'si soy' serve him to admit to his inferior position and to his masochistic desire, but he then implies that it would be a pity to lose what they have gained. 'No me dejes perder

lo que he ganado' (l.12) is the poet's realisation that their relationship, with all its perceived imperfection, struggles and instabilities, has nonetheless improved the poet's position over time. The transient images and transformations throughout the poem underline this unstable quality, but also point to the poet's tolerance of instability as an inevitable process and as a necessary part of desire. The final two lines, the poet's demand, are a firm proposal to the beloved that he/she embrace the changing nature of both of them and their inevitable subjection to temporal transience and death. Their difference, latent in the beloved's own river as other to the poet's riverbank, must also be changed by time and by the poet's influence; since the poet's 'Otoño enajenado' symbolises the transient and decaying counterpart to the beloved's statuesque coldness and ideal beauty. The decaying and metamorphic qualities evoked by autumn and, moreover, by its ambivalent quality of 'enajenado'— which can mean 'crazed' and 'insane' but also 'ecstatic' and 'fascinated', as well as referring to a process of alienation from oneself or from someone close— suggest that the relationship of intimacy proposed by the poet is far from Platonic, ideal or stable.

The metamorphosis inherent in the natural imagery used and the ambivalent emotional complexities by which the poet fluctuates between pleasure and pain create a bold version of the *tempus fugit* trope present in traditional Petrarchan sonnets. The transgression of this sonnet lies in its disruption of the Petrarchan tradition to accommodate heterodox sexual and gender identities, latent in the adoption by the male poet of a submissive but reversible role and the linguistic ambiguity that eliminates gender or sexual certainty, instead proposing a non-normative vision of human desire and relationships. A very clear example of this is 'El amor duerme en el pecho del poeta', in which the poet speaks of a restrictive and problematic norm affecting the lovers' bodies and existence which complicates and encumbers their love relationship, presented as

heterodox and reversible in much the same way as in the aforementioned ‘Soneto de la dulce queja’.

In *Sonetos del amor oscuro* the concern with the limits of desire and its inextricable link with mortality is often articulated as a confluence of pleasure and pain. By destabilising and queering their meanings and significations a sense of ambivalence is conveyed which attempts to redefine and challenge the norms governing them. A poetics of pain and pleasure takes place in the sonnet ‘Llagas de amor’:

Esta luz, este fuego que devora,  
este paisaje gris que me rodea,  
este dolor por una sola idea,  
esta angustia de cielo, mundo y hora,

este llanto de sangre que decora  
lira sin pulso ya, lúbrica tea,  
este peso del mar que me golpea,  
este alacrán que por mi pecho mora,

son guirnalda de amor, cama de herido,  
donde sin sueño, sueño tu presencia  
entre las ruinas de mi pecho hundido.

Y aunque busco la cumbre de prudencia  
me da tu corazón valle tendido  
con cicuta y pasión de amarga ciencia. (2010: 59)

Both quatrains consist of an enumeration of asyndetic elements juxtaposed by commas which exemplify the ‘love wounds’ alluded to in the title. ‘Este/a’ is repeated anaphorically at the beginning of seven of the eight lines and twice in the first line, and



the separation by commas of the 'wounds' occurs after every line and after every new element, creating an accelerated rhythm in the composition. This symmetry in the internal structure also serves to punctuate the sequence of the quatrains and the tercets, making the internal logic of the poem more cohesive and accentuating the overarching theme of love wounds.

The poetic voice adopts a position of suffering, listing the 'symptoms' of his pain before introducing the beloved in the tenth line and thus delaying the reason for his dissatisfaction until the last tercet. The elements juxtaposed in the first half of the sonnet are thus metaphorical instances that contribute to the also metaphorical general meaning of the poem: that of the physical wounds caused by the poet's desire for the beloved. These range over a variety of semantic fields, the most prominent ones being fire and physical pain. All of them converge in the sense of embodiment of the poet's suffering, creating a web of significations hinging on the poet's senses and corporeality, which makes the image of suffering more immediate and evident. In the first quatrain, light, a burning fire and a grey landscape situate the poet's pain in the realm of sight. Afterwards, the pain becomes emotional through the words 'idea' and 'angustia', but the latter is modified by concrete elements like 'cielo', 'mundo' and 'hora'. The poet's emotional pain is thus felt not only epistemologically ('una sola idea'), but given a sense of concreteness in the total experience of reality encompassed by the elements of space ('mundo'), time ('hora') and the universe ('cielo' can mean sky and atmosphere but also refers by extension to metaphysical ideas like heaven, God or the afterlife). This pain the poet feels thus extends to every aspect of his existence, whether physical or metaphysical. It is no wonder that this poem has been associated with the Spanish lyrical tradition of mysticism and particularly the sonnets by San Juan de la Cruz, in which topics like religious faith, martyrdom or spiritual communion with God are often equated with 'llagas', wounds or

burning flames.<sup>53</sup> Immediately afterwards, the enumeration continues and returns to physical pain, although the ‘llanto’ becomes again a combination of emotional and corporeal suffering in its synthesis with ‘sangre’. The transformation of tears into blood symbolises the usual association in the mystical tradition of spiritual elevation and physical pain, such that mystics like Santa Teresa de Jesús or San Juan represented their mystical communion with God as a scene of corporeal ecstasy in which pleasure and pain were experienced simultaneously through God’s wounding or burning of their body. This imagery was very often used by Lorca in his poetry from as far back in his *oeuvre* as his juvenilia.<sup>54</sup> The bloody tears and their particular synthesis of pain and pleasure are further modified by the objects they stain in the sonnet: ‘lira sin pulso ya, lúbrica tea’. The lyre and the torch re-inscribe the poet’s pain in the realm of the senses: respectively, they evoke sound and sight; but, in addition, the semantic field of fire is again introduced in combination with light as in the first quatrain. This line, however, adds a further element to this combination that returns to the dichotomy pleasure/pain seen earlier. ‘Lúbrica’, which translates as lewd or lascivious but also retains the sense of wetness and slipperiness that characterises a torch, infuses sexual connotations in the fiery image of the torch, rekindled by the poet’s bloody tears as the pulseless lyre (dead as a body without pulse) is rekindled by the poet’s painful desire. The ambivalence of this desire mirrors the ‘sweet complaint’ of the ‘Soneto de la dulce queja’ and the masochistic role the poet takes on when describing his relationship with the beloved. The last two lines in the quatrain adopt a similar approach to the ambivalence of the poet’s suffering: the weight of the sea hitting the poet’s body is an image hinging on the usual life associations

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<sup>53</sup> Anderson establishes a connection between Lorca’s imagery in *Sonetos del amor oscuro* and the Spanish mystical poetic tradition (1990: 328-335).

<sup>54</sup> In my Master’s Dissertation, I analysed Lorca’s juvenilia poems and his re-appropriation of the mystic tradition of San Juan de la Cruz and Santa Teresa de Ávila (García López 2013: 71).

of water and its capacity to drown and destroy, while the image of a scorpion and its painful sting is presented as an internal part of the poet's body in that it lives within him, suggesting his pain is self-inflicted.

The first tercet continues the logic introduced in the quatrains, offering an explanation to the list of love wounds juxtaposed previously. The examples of the poet's pain are all captured literally in a love wreath, a circle that explains his suffering. As in the 'Soneto de la guirnalda de rosas', the garland or wreath image has ambivalent love/death associations, which coalesce in this poem again as evidence of the multifaceted nature of the poet's desire. He is lying on a 'cama de herido', hurt and wounded by the beloved's love, simultaneously sleepless but dreaming of the beloved's presence, a further example of the poet's exploration of love as a source of pleasure and pain, of life and death. The resolution in the final tercet nonetheless fails to arrive at any sort of synthesis or alleviation of his pain, since he sees himself as helpless in the face of the beloved's presence. Whilst he ostensibly seeks a 'cumbre de prudencia', some sort of way to abstain or resist the beloved's charms, the latter's 'valle tendido'—which, by analogy, suggests the horizontal position the lovers may adopt in a sexual encounter and the earthly realm of carnality opposed to the previous high summit of spirituality—provides the poet with a poison and a passion that respond to 'bitter science'. The physical and emotional attraction (seen as 'science' in the sense of unstoppable irrational chemistry) that the poet feels is thus so uncontrollable that, despite the pain it inflicts on him, he rejects prudence and abandons himself to its mystical pleasure/pain ecstasy.

A different kind of masochistic attitude on the poet's part is explored in this sonnet. Whilst the emotions experienced by the poet and the confluence of pleasure and pain are reminiscent of other sonnets analysed, this one is particularly subversive in its close association with the mystical tradition. While the imagery is clearly referencing the

aforementioned religious background, especially Saint Juan and Saint Teresa's poetry, the sonnet's language is undoubtedly Lorquian. 'Alacrán', 'guirnalda de amor', 'cicuta y pasión', to cite but a few, allude to Lorca's own conception of desire as a physical wound provoking both pain and pleasure; but the content of the poem is re-appropriating the religious imagery to explore a 'pagan' carnal desire. The Mystics admittedly used pagan images of humanly love to speak of divine love, so here Lorca has turned that on its head and done the opposite. The final tercet in this sonnet establishes the poet's rejection of prudence and abstinence in the face of the beloved, so he gives into bitter science (science opposing mystical faith and irrationality) and thus applies a mystical passion to his human desire. Mirroring the mimetic process of re-appropriation seen in *Diván del Tamarit*, Lorca borrows and reconfigures a set of traditional conventions, only to perform an unexpected queering representation. He 'rewrites' the sonnet in order to articulate the obscurity of his beloved and his desire, bestowing 'nuevos paisajes y acentos ignorados' (OC III: 318) on the poetic images he (re)creates.

### **'Distance Sonnets' and Wounding (Hetero)Normativity**

Within the sonnet cycle, 'El poeta pide a su amor que le escriba' initiates a group of sonnets in which the poet comes to terms with his beloved's absence. As in 'Llagas de amor', in this sonnet there is a further reference to Saint Teresa: in this case to her mystical composition 'Vivo sin vivir en mí' (1861: 509-10). This eponymous line is reproduced almost entirely by Lorca ('que si vivo sin mí') in keeping with the use of oxymorons and paradoxical images in the sonnet to express the poet's unstable and mutable emotions towards his beloved. In the first quatrain, both the line mirroring Saint Teresa's poem and the end of the first line play with the life/death contrast. The poet's desire, felt literally deep within his entrails ('Amor de mis entrañas'), is already established as a process driving him to experience both joy and suffering. The oxymoron

‘viva muerte’ is an example of the complex desperation the poet feels whilst he waits for his lover to write him a letter, but he suggests that his wait, although painful, keeps him alive in his desire for the beloved (‘que si vivo sin mí quiero perderte’).

In this as well as in the three subsequent sonnets, the poet tries to abridge the distance between him and the beloved, not only through his poetry but also by referencing their physical absence and seeking ways for them to communicate. Specifically, ‘El poeta habla por teléfono con el amor’ constitutes an appraisal of modernity, focusing on references to the telephone and its great technological capabilities at this time starting to be widespread. The poet is astounded and pleased to be able to speak to his beloved on the phone, something which seems to bring them closer together despite the distance between them. In ‘El poeta pregunta a su amor por la “Ciudad Encantada” de Cuenca’ the poet, again away from the beloved, tries to experience some sort of contact between them vicariously through the beloved’s visit to the Spanish city of Cuenca. Similarly, in ‘Soneto gongorino en que el poeta manda a su amor una paloma’ the poet sends his beloved a dove to act as an intermediary which will help him feel his beloved close to him vicariously. Focusing on the second of these four distance/absence sonnets, the lovers’ phone conversation, the poet’s emotions fluctuate between the joy of listening to the beloved’s voice and the melancholy and angst provoked by absence:

Tu voz regó la duna de mi pecho  
 en la dulce cabina de madera.  
 Por el sur de mis pies fue primavera  
 y al norte de mi frente flor de helecho.

Pino de luz por el espacio estrecho  
 cantó sin alborada y sementera  
 y mi llanto prendió por vez primera

coronas de esperanza por el techo. (2010: 65, ll. 1-8)

The two quatrains describe the poet's experience (possibly for the first time) making a telephone call from a phone booth. The sound of his beloved's voice prompts the poet to wonder at the amazing capabilities of the new telecommunications device, inspiring his hopes that his absence from the beloved has been diminished. The poet's body, transformed into a sand dune ('la duna de mi pecho'), a plant springing into life ('Por el sur de mis pies fue primavera'), and a fern blossoming ('al norte de mi frente flor de helecho') is filled with energy and awakened by the beloved's remote voice through the receiver. The almost magical device is compared to a pine of light which grows without sunlight or sowing, unbelievably coming out of a narrow space.

However, the poet's tears of hope and joy at the end of the second quatrain also inspire the ambiguous melancholy filling the two tercets. Their act of communication, although connecting their two voices, also makes it abundantly clear that they are apart. The poet thus revels in his ambivalent feelings, since their voices are both sweet to each other's ears but also far away from each other and thus ominous, impalpable and deadly:

Dulce y lejana voz por mí vertida.

Dulce y lejana voz por mí gustada.

Lejana y dulce voz amortecida.

Lejana como oscura corza herida.

Dulce como un sollozo en la nevada.

¡Lejana y dulce en tuétano metida! (2010: 65, ll. 9-14)

The tercets present alternating parallel structures ('Dulce y lejana'; 'Lejana y dulce'), with recurring patterns that accelerate their rhythm gradually and culminating in the final

exclamatory line which is almost like a vehement scream of desperation. The sense of sound takes a prominent place in these tercets, since the voices across the phone line are transformed into liquid that is poured and then tasted ('voz por mí vertida'; 'voz por mí gustada') but then the voice becomes dark and is dying ('amortecida'; 'como oscura corza herida'). This suggests the fragility and artificiality of the lovers' actual contact, such that when the sound on a telephone falters or there is interference it is common to say it is 'dying'. Lorca thus adds this connotation to the unsettling feeling of actual/artificial physical contact established through telecommunications: the poet feels in close contact with the beloved but later realises it is as sweet and wonderful as it is artificial and isolating. His final cry sums up his ambivalent feelings towards this sensorial contact, causing him joy and hope but also piercing him with angst and melancholy: 'en tuétano metida' sounds like a reproach to the beloved that his/her voice causes unbearable and incessant pain in the poet's head. Mixing appraisal and suspicion of modernity and technology, this sonnet seems to embody the ambivalent feelings Lorca experienced when he visited New York, enjoying and admiring the huge progresses that capitalism afforded while complaining of the soulless society it created and the decaying values he perceived in comparison with Spain.

Possibly one of the best-known sonnets by Lorca is the untitled '[¡Ay voz secreta del amor oscuro!]', the title given being the first line of the poem. This sonnet's expressive and vehement tone and its association with the very title of the poetic collection can be seen as an encapsulation of *Sonetos del amor oscuro*'s spirit and an appropriate ending to this chapter. Most of Lorca's thematic and structural elements analysed so far are included in this sonnet: the play of opposites, the said allusion to darkness and obscure love, the natural world, Eros and Thanatos, parallel structures and spatiotemporal uncertainty:

¡Ay voz secreta del amor oscuro!  
 ¡ay balido sin lanas! ¡ay herida!  
 ¡ay aguja de hiel, camelia hundida!  
 ¡ay corriente sin mar, ciudad sin muro!

¡Ay noche inmensa de perfil seguro,  
 montaña celestial de angustia erguida!  
 ¡ay perro en corazón, voz perseguida!  
 ¡silencio sin confín, lirio maduro!

Huye de mí, caliente voz de hielo,  
 no me quieras perder en la maleza  
 donde sin fruto gimen carne y cielo.

Dejo el duro marfil de mi cabeza,  
 apiádate de mí, ¡rompe mi duelo!  
 ¡que soy amor, que soy naturaleza! (2010: 71)

The quatrains present a parallel syntax articulated in a juxtaposition of sentences between exclamation marks and the anaphoric repetition of the interjection ‘¡ay!’ . This symmetry is further reinforced by the repeated use of a noun followed by qualitative adjectives or prepositional phrases modifying it and adding a disconcerting, unusual or incongruous connotation to it. Following this systematic fashion, then, the voice first lamented by the poet is the ‘secret voice of obscure love’.

As mentioned before, many have taken this to signify the secret nature of homosexuality in Lorca’s time, despite the profound ambiguity and vagueness that characterises the entire sonnet cycle and the lack of overt allusions to same-sex desire. What is clear in the sonnet, though, is that the vehement and intimate tone inherent in the



quatrains inscribe this secret obscure voice in a series of unusual realities, such as a bleat without wool, a needle of bile, a drowned camellia, a current without sea and a city without walls. All of these, together with the well-known wound, resonate as queer realities in their transgression of normative laws delimiting them. The sheep evoked by the bleat is lacking the wool so characteristic of the former, as is the river current lacking its usual sea to flow towards or the city unrestrained by walls literally delimiting it. Their juxtaposition in the quatrain identifies them with the deathly aspect inherent in their transgressive nature, signified by the ever-gaping wound. The poet's flesh is open to mirror the fractures and breaks represented in the poem and the conflicted nature of his voice and thought that will be tackled in the tercets. The second quatrain continues the list of lamented or celebrated realities, adding an immense night with a clear-cut profile, a celestial mountain of erected angst, a metonymical dog within a heart, a persecuted voice, a limitless silence and a mature lily.

The ideas in this quatrain are even more detached from logic and hinge more on their contradictory or paradoxical nature. The first two lines play with the visual contrast between darkness, focus and size. The immensity of night and the mountain and the latter's celestial quality situate the images in a natural setting, but the human qualities attributed to both ('perfil seguro', 'angustia erguida') personify them, so their resonance affects the poetic voice who is here an observer in awe of their proportions and the angst they produce in him. The poet is thus a conflicted character whose resentment and suffering get mixed with the realisation and acceptance of his queer position. A dog in his heart and his persecuted voice are juxtaposed with the immensity of silence, so the final lines of the quatrain expose this conflict in the contrast between the sonnet's language and the allusion to silence and repression.

All these queer objects invoke a sense of dissatisfaction and fittingly they appear next to the evocative ‘¡ay!’, a word as fluid and rich in potential meanings in the Spanish language as it is disconcerting and polysemic. ‘Ay’ can refer to the ‘quejío’ present in flamenco songs; to the immense *pathos* evoked in tragedies (similar to the English ‘alas!’); or even to an idiomatic sign of commiseration and recognition to express pain, surprise, happiness, endearment and even pleasure and celebration. This multiplicity of connotations are at work in the sonnet to add a further disorienting and ambivalent signification to the images. If ‘ay’ is the sound of pain but can also be a cry of celebration or even desire, the position of the poetic voice is thus as unclear and ambivalent (quite fittingly a ‘voz secreta’) as the queer images presented.

However, following this array of elements brought together by their dissimilarities and particularities, the two tercets seem to contradict each other and thus present the poetic voice’s conflicted position. The first one sees the poet ask this voice to leave him lest he is lost or falls into the dangerous place where his desire would be realised, while the final one presents the poet’s self-conviction that his initial thoughts were too strict and that his desire deserves pity as his love is, after all, natural and pervades different aspects of reality. Whilst the conflict is, as usual, never resolved in the sonnet, the very act of exposing and embracing his queerness by articulating it is the poet’s rejection of silence and secrecy, his overt contestation of (hetero)normativity. The vehemence and authority in the final line of the sonnet shows the poet’s acknowledgment of the multiplicity of aspects that separate him from the norm, but these are in no way avoidable or rejected. His pairing of love and nature is presented as the possible —and preferable— resolution of his conflict, suggesting that his desire is far too powerful and immense to ignore despite the suffering it may occasionally bring and the death drive to which it necessarily succumbs. For by opposing the very logic of opposition, the queer denies the norm that

creates that queerness, opening a wound that moves beyond normativity and from which the will to desire emerges, although that desire inevitably announces the death of the sign and of symbolic meaning. No possible identity underlies the sonnet's images, but it is in this non-identity that the poet accesses *duende* and its queer fantasy inhabiting the sonnet by tearing it open. The poet revels in this wound precisely because in so doing his poetic discourse acquires the unprecedented aesthetic substance he seeks: the (endless) redefinition of preconceived and restrictive norms, and the transgressive *pathos* that *duende* playfully performs.

## 2. Grotesque Forms, Corporeal Boundaries, and the Wound in the Late Drawings

Regalo al alma, tiros al sentido  
(Soria Olmedo 2009: 3)

As a category keen on boundary-crossings, *duende*'s wounds are open under the grotesque rubric in drawing form, articulating in visual terms the poetics of destructured bodies and broken limits. Lorca's graphic *oeuvre* spans roughly from 1923 until his death in 1936, although there are drawings dating as far back as 1917. In the major catalogue available to date, compiled by Mario Hernández with the assistance of the Fundación Federico García Lorca and the Spanish Ministerio de Cultura (1990) and translated into English by Christopher Maurer (1991), there are around 383 catalogued pieces organised chronologically. Of all these drawings, there are some which stand on their own, that is, which were drawn or conceived as independent pieces; and some which were designed to serve another purpose, like accompany artefacts such as a book of poems (by Lorca or by another author) or the stage of a play or puppet play; as a dedication or gift to one of the poet's friends; as costume designs for the theatre; or even as autographs or illustrations of documents. The two only major exhibitions of Lorca's drawings during his lifetime were an individual one in Barcelona in 1927 at the Galerías Dalmau, aided by the poet's friends Sebastián Gasch and the owners of the gallery themselves, and a section in a collective exhibition at the Ateneo Popular in Huelva, as part of the *Semana del Arte Nuevo* in 1932.<sup>55</sup>

Due to the high volume of graphic works in existence, it is worth considering which of Lorca's drawings will be relevant to this study and why. Since my thesis

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<sup>55</sup> The Dalmau exhibition ran from 25 June to 2 July 1927, and the *Semana del Arte Nuevo* in Huelva took place on 26 June, lasting until 3 July 1932 (Buxán Bran 2003: 323). For a more thorough description of the first Lorca exhibition, see Gallego Morell 1988:195 and Lahuerta 2010: 251.

concentrates on Lorca's late poetic works and his film script, both following his 'crisis period' and his stay in New York prompting a negotiation with the avant-garde and an experimental and innovative effort, it seems appropriate to focus mainly on the drawings produced in his mature years and primarily on the ones designed as independent works, although occasionally I will have recourse to earlier drawings or illustrative works as points of reference or contextualisation.

In the period from 1929 to 1930, Lorca's trip to New York proved to be the beginning of a new and important chapter in his life and his work. This change of scenery, which has often been described as the result of a 'severe personal crisis' for the poet (Harris 1998: 83), meant the opening of new horizons and an opportunity to renew his creative confidence. From his New York years onwards, his conception of himself as a multimedia artist became more prominent and the influence of avant-garde movements more palpable. The interests of contemporary artists were varied and often aimed to experiment with new modes of expression, perhaps a reason for Lorca's incursion into film and other creative practices, although his earlier years at the Residencia de Estudiantes in Madrid and particularly his friendship and collaboration with Salvador Dalí and Luis Buñuel also set this in motion.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, his wish for innovation started to take shape at a more profound level as he tried his hand at Cubism, Expressionism and Surrealism in his New York poems. After completing *Poeta en Nueva York*, Lorca was determined to include photography, photomontage and drawings in the published version of the poems, a wish which unfortunately never became a reality due to his abrupt death and which only came to fruition partially with the inclusion of some drawings and photographs in its posthumous editions.

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<sup>56</sup> The project that Lorca and Dalí worked on, *Los Putrefactos*, the lectures they attended and the letters they wrote to each other during these years attest to their learning process and mutual enrichment in their artistic styles. For more details of their collaborations and artistic ventures at the Residencia, see SECC (ed.). 2010. *Dalí, Lorca y la Residencia de Estudiantes vols. 1 and 2*.

A close look at Lorca's drawings from 1930-1936 reveals the representation of phenomena quite relevant to the analysis of his post-New York works: the wounded body and corporeal limits and boundaries. Depictions of fragmented body parts, bodily issue and physical deconstruction abound in Lorca's graphic works, which on the whole contributes to create a sense of shock and morbid attraction, whilst also prompting unsettling and disconcerting reactions in the viewer. Ultimately, these wounded bodies aim to transgress expectations related to idealised beauty and to explore the limits of life and death, both destabilised and questioned in the drawings. Some of them present the enlivening function of wounding on presumably dead bodies, while others veil or blur the identification of the depicted characters as fixed or finite both corporeally and in terms of their sex and gender. The arguable lack of technical sophistication of some drawings, insofar as they often retain a quality of unpolished rough sketches, nonetheless conveys a sense of immediacy and simplicity revealing Lorca's craftsmanship as a drawing artist and his poetic processes of pictorial inspiration, conception and creation. Their technically imperfect or unpolished appearance allows Lorca to hint (meta-artistically) at the fast-paced creativity of drawing as opposed to literary creation, which adds a further layer of meaning to the analysis of his graphic works in their own right and in comparison to his poems and aesthetic theory.<sup>57</sup>

The late drawings also share a preference for the grotesque image. Grotesque originally referred to mural art usually depicting floral or animal motifs which tended to be fused with human forms. The word 'grotesque' comes from the Latin *grotto*, meaning

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<sup>57</sup> Lorca's insistence on gathering and publishing his graphic works after his 1927 exhibition and his prolific graphic production from then onwards attest to his sense of pride and determination as a pictorial artist, contradicting the beliefs that his drawings were just a passing fad in his career: 'El hecho de que durante cierto tiempo pensase insistentemente en reunir sus dibujos en un volumen resulta especialmente significativo de como para Federico su obra plástica era un proyecto artístico coherente y absolutamente reflexivo e intelectualizado, nada que ver con un mero divertimento, un hobby, o meras obras de un dominguero' (Buxán Bran 2003: 323).

a small cave or hollow. Its original meaning was applied to an extravagant style of Ancient Roman decorative art rediscovered and then copied in Rome at the end of the fifteenth century which proliferated in the underground caves and corridors of the city. Spreading from Italian to the other European languages, the term was long used largely interchangeably with ‘arabesque’ and ‘moresque’ for types of decorative patterns using curving foliage elements. Since at least the eighteenth century, ‘grotesque’ has come to be used as a general adjective for the strange, fantastic, ugly, incongruous, unpleasant, or disgusting, and thus is often used to describe weird shapes and distorted forms. In art, performance, and literature, grotesque may also refer to something that simultaneously invokes in an audience a feeling of uncomfortable bizarreness as well as empathetic pity. Although there are several motifs associated with the grotesque and different typologies identified by scholars, many agree that its three main tropes are doubleness, hybridity and metamorphosis. The representation of human/animal/plant fusions and coalescences have often been studied as the artistic exploration of alterity and change affecting human existence and experience while challenging ideated canons of beauty in art.<sup>58</sup>

Lorca’s knowledge of modern art and his negotiation with avant-garde artistic movements show signs of the influence of the grotesque tradition, especially in relation to Spanish artists like Francisco de Goya or El Greco (both cited in *Teoría y juego del duende*). *Duende* is keen to play with edges and boundaries, crossing and breaking them so they can be redefined and recreated in the process of art-making. It is perhaps quite apt to refer to *duende* as a chthonic force, as Maurer does (2007: 35), in that its connection with the earth and what is under its surface, like the subterranean *grottoes* used to be, constantly mixes and distorts limits between differentiated realms. Thus Lorca’s drawings in the 1930s will aim to transgress bodily forms and contours to confound and mutate the

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<sup>58</sup> For a in-depth study of the grotesque in art, see Astruc 2010.

characters depicted. Some late graphic works will also experiment with lines and abstract images departing altogether from logical expectations and human forms, relying however on similar processes of movement, change and distortion. These pervasive elements in Lorca's drawings bear significance in relation to the introduction and development of the grotesque in modern art. The romantic period marked the entrance of the grotesque into the mainstream of modern expression, as a means to explore alternative modes of experience and expression and to challenge the presumed universals of classical beauty, especially the neoclassical foundations of art history and aesthetics, with their emphasis on ideated beauty and rational inquiry. Connelly (2003) outlines three actions or processes at work in the grotesque image, actions that are both destructive and constructive. Images gathered under the grotesque rubric include 'those that combine unlike things in order to challenge established realities or construct new ones; those that deform or decompose things; and those that are metamorphic' (2003: 2). The metamorphic grotesque can combine and deform in the same way as its static counterparts, but the metamorphic 'exists in the process, the 'morphing' from one thing or form to another. It also seems much more reliant on mimesis and illusion, transgressing them for its impact' (2003: 3). Grotesques are typically characterised by what they lack: fixity, stability, order. Mikhail Bakhtin emphasised the creative dimensions of this flux, describing the grotesque as 'a body in the act of becoming [...] never finished, never completed; it is continually built, created, and builds and creates another body' (Bakhtin 1984: 317). Bakhtin's description of the grotesque finds its roots in its particular depiction of body-world and life-death coalescences:

the body swallows the world and is itself swallowed by the world [...] Eating, drinking, defecation and other elimination (sweating, blowing of the nose, sneezing), as well as copulation, pregnancy, dismemberment, swallowing up by



another body— all of these acts are performed on the confines of the body and the outer world, or on the confines of the old and new body. In all these events the beginning and end of life are closely linked and interwoven. (1984: 317)

The grotesque is thus ‘a boundary creature and does not exist except in relation to a boundary, convention, or expectation’ (Connelly 2003: 3). These boundaries mark the sites in which the body relates to the world surrounding it and in which the limits between life and death become blurred. Lorca’s drawings offer the viewer shocking images of dismembered bodies, monstrous creatures in the process of being created and overlapping corporeal boundaries that defy expectations and interpretations. Mirroring the unexpected metaphors and image associations from his poems and the incongruity explored in his film script, Lorca’s graphic works question and distort the limits of corporeality, erotic desire and temporality, mixing human, animal and floral motifs in unprecedented and shocking ways. The grotesque image allows Lorca to articulate in visual terms his idea of human experience as unstable and metamorphic and his notion of *duende* as a rule-breaking, anti-normative creative category.

### **New York, La Habana, and Beyond: The Male Portrait**

Lorca’s trip to the United States — which included a short stay in Cuba— was doubtless a very productive period in his career, culminating in the creation of one of his best-known poetic collections, *Poeta en Nueva York*, his film script *Viaje a la luna*, his theatre plays *El público* and *Así que pasen cinco años*, and several other artistic ventures, especially graphic works such as drawings and photomontages. Apart from the exploration of urban settings in his many depictions of the metropolis, Lorca’s drawings of this period focus especially on male figures: sailors, young men and dead or wounded male bodies. There is often an emphasis on grotesque fusions or interactions between

these characters and the animal and natural world. The three male portraits selected for analysis from this period not only hinge on the notion of corporeal instability and fragmentation, but also offer depictions that systematically play with the contrast between stasis and movement and aim to transgress conventions associated with artistic portraiture as well as those relating to representations of gender and sexual desire.

The unconventional bust portrait 'Busto de hombre muerto' [Fig.1] depicts a sombre interaction between the wounded human figure or corpse dominating the drawing and its earthy surroundings. Even though the eponymous dead man is portrayed as a corpse, due to his vacant eyes and his pale colour contrasting with the white, brown and blue more lively background, he is not completely devoid of movement and activity. His eyes are being animated by green and brown leaves and roots emanating from them, as if they were tears coming out of his eyes. His ears have little boxes attached to spiralling lines (of thread or wire) coming out of them and falling on the ground in the drawing, where they create a sense of weight by leaving marks spreading around them. In the far background, a pale blue sky overlooks disperse groups of plants springing into life as well as further actual metal springs like the ones coming out of the man's ears. Thus, the living natural background surrounding the man ironises the assertion of death in the drawing's title and the man's corpse-like demeanour. His tight connection with the surrounding world and the incongruous but lively objects emerging from his body suggest a non-finite quality to his mortality. The pale white canvas of his body is painted by the colourful objects springing from it and merging with it.

Towards the centre-right of the man's chest there is a unique red/orange mark — colours not used in any of the other motifs in the drawing— consisting of a sinuous irregular line describing a semicircle but bifurcating along its trajectory and ending in thick dots. The singularity of this mark, simulating a wound or a trail of blood around the

man's heart area, and its position towards the bottom of the drawing conveys a sense of movement downwards and an acute perspective foregrounding the man and distancing the background at the top. This effect makes all the objects in the drawing point down towards the wound mark (the plants on the man's shoulders, the springy boxes on both sides of his head, the leaves of the plants growing in the background), which acquires a central position and becomes the epicentre of the entire scene. Moreover, the curved angle of the wound accentuates the triangular direction the composition follows, starting from the wider background (formed by the horizontal line created by the blue fringe of sky at the very top and the more disperse objects at the back) and narrowing down in the foreground with the man's shoulder line and the leaves growing closer together and pointing towards the corpse's chest mark.

Because the wound is given such a prominent position, it becomes a sign of alert to the convergence of life and death in the drawing. This physical mark breaks the stasis by evoking the emanating blood and provokes the sense of movement surrounding the static corpse and its lifeless features. The wound becomes an impasse in the trajectory the elements in the scene follow, a route leading to the sure confirmation of the man's deceased status. To the contrary, though, the blood secretion from the wound sets the scene in motion, alerting the viewer to the multiple interactions between the man's body and the world around him, the coalescences and mutations which disturb his supposed lifeless state. The drawing's unresolved depiction of mortality proposes that the dead man from the title is not clearly dead after all. Instead, life envelops him and penetrates his body, whose transformation fills the scene with colour, movement and desire to grow and create. The transgression of idealised beauty carried out by foregrounding the disturbing presence of a corpse and its deformed, decomposing and mutating body emphasises the process of creation inherent in the engendering powers of the man's bleeding wound.

What would seem at first a sign of decay and decomposition is foregrounded as a site of change and creation, transforming the corpse's body into a source of life and grotesque beauty (its pale white vacant space is adorned by the floral motifs and their variety of colours). With blood as the nexus between destruction and creation, Lorca elaborates an aesthetic revision of a bust portrait, this time including the incongruous, the unsettling and the metamorphic, and giving them life-infusing and perspective-changing powers.

In the full body portrait 'Joven y Pirámides (Deseo de las ciudades muertas)' [Fig. 2], Lorca depicts a male figure standing in front of a group of white pyramids in a field or patch of land. The title's parenthetical addition, 'Desire of the Dead Cities', could refer to the desolate state of the young man's background and the funerary connotations of the pyramids in Egyptian antiquity. The incongruity of some of the objects in the drawing nonetheless suggests that the scene depicted responds to a desire to create an imaginary, fantastical or non-existent scenario, while also announcing the particular depiction of the young man's intermediate state between life and death.

The young man is fully dressed in plain greenish grey baggy clothes and wears black footwear or socks. He is standing on top of a blue rectangular podium or small platform and his body partially blocks one of the pyramids, which stands closer to the foreground than the rest. Next to the man is a strange machine consisting of a bigger wheel, supported by two rectangular pillars, with four blades in its centre forming a cross that seem to be rotating and a similar smaller wheel connected to the bigger one by a long cord or wire which in turn reaches down to the floor onto a rectangular base. This fan of sorts is either blowing air towards the young man or shooting at him, since there is a group of red sinewy lines emerging from the machine onto the man's upper body, resembling electrical waves or red cables. The impact on the man's chest propels a profusion of thick red lines exploding outwards and resembling a fountain of gushing

blood or a kindled flame. However, the man's eyes are firmly closed and his slight inclination forward with his arms stretched in front of him give a sense of passivity and lack of movement and sensation. He seems oblivious to this machine's effect, although both their positions indicate a close interaction between them and the generation of strong movement. As for the pyramids, all of them except two are topped by strange figures of small size consisting of a central human eye and a body of sorts formed by thick red lines ending in multiple small hands. The red figures seem to be dancing or standing in a balancing position atop the pyramids, and they are connected by a long red line linking them and the body of the young man (right at the point where the 'blood' emerges from his chest). The furthest pyramid in the background has nothing on top, and the pyramid located on the far left of the drawing only has a drawn eye with a multitude of thin lines emerging from it, all in black. This eye motif reoccurs in other drawings by Lorca, both concrete and abstract, as do the small hands which pervade practically all of his graphic works. The senses of sight and touch, as well as the allusion to the craftsmanship of the drawing are activated through these two motifs, making a meta-artistic comment on the drawing process, which supersedes and surveys the finished work like the eye/hand figures survey the scene from atop their pyramids. These balancing figures also convey a sense of movement, which contrasts the heavy stillness of the pyramids and that of the young man. Their connection to him seems to also mirror the movement from the wheeled machine, such that through their movement —and their sensory capacities— and that of the machine, the man's static state is vicariously reanimated. Much like in 'Busto de hombre muerto', the young man is brought out of his lifeless state (even though only from a decentred perspective) by the effect produced in his body by the bleeding wound, which sets in motion the multiple boundary-crossings and interactions happening between objects and bodies in the composition. Thus, the contrast between the man's static

(possibly deadly) state and the moving peripheral objects makes the central wound on the man's chest a site of collision in which life and death meet. The incongruity of the objects surrounding the young man also create unresolved questions that make his identity and his ontological status unclear, although they insist on his liminal position between living and dying. Albeit in a slightly more complex manner than 'Busto de hombre muerto', this drawing hinges on the transformative and creative function attributed to physical fragmentation and the threat of mortality: the wound allows the artist to destroy and transgress notions of stability and present fluidity and transformation as aesthetic principles.

One of the few Cuban drawings of this period is 'Ilustración del 900' [Fig. 3], a portrait of a blue-eyed man with sinuously thick red lips wearing a brimmed hat (bowler or trilby) and what seems like a big round collar around his neck. At the top of the page appears a handwritten caption that reads 'Este chico ya no podrá estar alegre porque no dio a tiempo las bofetadas...'. Surrounding his face are a set of circular lines that travel all around the drawing, ending in hands of varying sizes that adopt different positions on the left and right corners and sides of the drawing. The thicker darker lines that shape the head of the man and his central position suggest his portrait constitutes the foreground of the drawing, while the lines and hands are thinner and sometimes interrupted, thus producing a blurry effect which circumscribes them to the background or periphery of the composition. However, these lines also move across the man's face, head and neck, describing circular shapes intersecting with one another and crisscrossing on top of the portrait *per se*. The proportion of the bigger head to the smaller hands also contributes to this subordinate and invasive effect, as does the more intense colour of the man's eyes and lips as opposed to the blurred hues of the hands. Three of them are the same colour as the background of the drawing, a tonal beige colour, whilst the biggest hand, situated on

the right hand bottom corner of the drawing, is coloured red. From this same hand spring some root-like lines in the same colour, extending to the right bottom edge of the drawing.

The peacefulness of the pastel tones in the man's face contrasts the movement and profundity evoked by the floating hands in the background and the bright colours of his facial features. His vacant and somewhat hermetic expression distances him from the viewer but his captivating blue eyes, intense and luminous, become an attractive focal point. His warm red lips are forming a pout or crooked smile, and his blue hair is reminiscent of Lorca's clown figures in previous drawings, poems and plays. However, the lack of expressivity present in his demeanour and underlined in the caption of the drawing subverts the archetypal happy appearance of a traditional clown. If anything, the man would have to resemble a Pierrot figure, the quintessential sad clown inherited from the *commedia dell'arte* which Lorca also explored profusely in his works.<sup>59</sup> What makes this would-be Pierrot interesting is that he is not referred to as 'Clown', 'Pierrot' or 'Harlequin' in the drawing's caption or title, although his clown-like features are quite evident. He is merely described as a young man who cannot be happy because he did not perform his slaps in time. The small hands thus come into play as slapping agents, haunting the man's space as pervasive elements which literally invade his portrait with a violence mirroring physical harm. The act of slapping is only implied in the title, which signals the man's ironic lack of hands as a possible reason for the abundance of these around him. His state of unhappiness would then be caused by his failure to slap

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<sup>59</sup>An important study by David George (1995) thoroughly examined the *commedia dell'arte* characters and their importance in Lorca's production, especially the figures of the Pierrot and the Harlequin. Peral Vega identifies Pierrot as Lorca's '*probable self*', characterised by his sadness and frustration as 'a pitiful and solitary buffoon who exhibits his empty eye-sockets, expressing the absence of a loved object on which to project his gaze; a solitary clown whose mouth is hidden beneath hyperbolic ruffs as a symbol for the desperate struggle to express his love as an equal' (2015: 6).

somebody, but the excess of hands in the drawing turns this failure into an obsession, adding to the disconcerting and incongruous juxtaposition taking place.

The allusion to the violence of slapping and to the man's angry state is a further point of contrast with the drawing's bright and pastel colour palette and the man's refined and elegant appearance. His look resembles not only the Pierrot figure, but also that of the Aesthete or the Dandy, with a taste for fashionable ornaments like the hat and the exaggerated collar.<sup>60</sup> His delicate and demure face is heightened by the rosy blush on his cheeks and the bright red sinuous pout on his lips. This idealised and aestheticised appearance makes the young man's relation to the hands in the drawing ambivalent. The profusion of hands and the effect of frantic movement created by the multitude of overlapping lines situate the young man as an object of desire, which all the hands are striving to touch. The difficulty in establishing where the hands come from and where the boundaries between them and the man lie nonetheless complicates this tactile relationship.

Furthermore, the slaps and the unreadable expression on the man's face blur the intentions —violent, erotic, or both— of the tactile agents and the artist's gaze. The man's appearance (elegantly attired with delicate blushed cheeks and bright eyes and lips) and the indeterminacy and aloofness of his expression also veil his identity in terms of marked gender distinctions. This resonates with Butler's argument that gender should be thought of as a performative effect of reiterative acts: '[...] the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being' (1990: 33). Whilst 'Ilustración del 900's caption refers to the protagonist clearly as male, the general title

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<sup>60</sup> Reed documents the Aesthete and Dandy traditions and the emergence of the homosexual artist paradigm deriving from the scandalous trials of Oscar Wilde at the turn of the twentieth century (2011: 93-104).



and the elements in the drawing do not emphasise any distinct gender marks. The portrait eludes an unambiguously male representation, instead denying a clear-cut gender identification and proposing an androgynous look. This suggests a gender-fluidity and ambiguity which, together with the tactility implied by the hands, accentuates the drawing's homoerotic gaze and challenges the character's intelligibility, thus going against the norms by which the caption's description seems to abide. This disconnect between word and image subverts the stylisation of the character's body, tampering with the performative normativising process that Butler theorises. In the character's formation as male, the dissonant elements that deny this maleness act like ironic slaps that violently shake the gender expectations created through the caption.

Unlike any other male portraits by Lorca, the young man in 'Ilustración del 900' does not clearly and univocally represent any of his archetypal or recurrent characters (i.e. the sailor, the clown, the corpse, Lorca himself, Salvador Dalí, etc.). The man's uniqueness is palpable precisely in his ambiguous aloofness and neutrality, yet his prominent features and his gender uncertainty make him visually appealing to the viewer. His subtle eroticisation and the particular abundance of small hands interacting with both the graphic contours of the drawing and the young man himself add a further layer of ambiguity to the blurry limits of desire and violence (as well as those of gender identification) explored in the composition.<sup>61</sup>

### **'Only Mystery': The Argentina Drawings**

Lorca's six-month sojourn in Argentina in 1933-34 exemplified his renewed self-confidence and maturity as an artist: he gave several lectures (*Juego y teoría del duende*

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<sup>61</sup> Lorca's preference for male portraits during his North American period must be added to the drawings depicting urban scenes, fantastical animals, calligrams and more abstract and grotesque visions, some of which will be discussed further in the fourth chapter of this thesis.

took place at this time), came in contact with well-known artists and received international acclaim for his work.<sup>62</sup> He was sought after as an illustrator as well at this time, which shows the acceptance of the value of his graphic works in their own right. A group of ten India ink drawings, all produced in 1934 in Argentina, were the result of a unique collaborative edition of Pablo Neruda's book of poems *Paloma por dentro, o sea, la mano de vidrio*, a one-copy edition with typewritten poems by the Chilean poet and drawings by Lorca intended as a gift to a mutual Argentinian friend, Sara Tornú de Rojas Paz "La Rubia" (Olivares 2001: 41; Gibson 1990: 371). This multimedia collaboration was one amongst the three collector's editions to which Lorca contributed his drawings (two by Ricardo E. Molinari and one by Salvador Novo), and serves as a starting point to analyse the close relationship between multiple media in the poet's later years.

The Argentinian drawings were conceived as an intermedial project, since they were designed as part of a literary-illustrative collection. Each drawing presents a typewritten title at the top, which invites an addition of the title's meaning to the visual meaning of the pictorial elements. Bearing in mind that drawings are 'by their very nature much more immediate than paintings and so can give us greater insight into the process of making a work of art' (Acton 2009: 175), it is important to examine how these drawings hinge on the immediacy of visuality and the connections established with linguistic and further sensory elements. These meaning combinations will shed an interesting light on Lorca's graphic exploration of fragmented bodies as a way to disrupt and play with preconceived notions and norms on the representation of desire, mortality and gender.

One of the most intriguing drawings in this group is 'Labios', also known as 'Walking around' [Fig. 4], in which the minimal representation of isolated body parts

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<sup>62</sup> Olivares gives a detailed account of the many social events Lorca attended while in Argentina: his fame had reached the main circles of artists and intellectuals there, all eager to meet and interact with the Spaniard (2001: 41-45; 51-60; 84-87).

precludes the better-known 'Manos' drawings and is in keeping with Lorca's exploration of corporeality in his film script and poetic works of the time. Formed of seven sets of lips all closed in a pout and connected to one another by elongated lines, the composition of 'Labios' suggests an upwards movement, from the biggest pair of lips at the bottom right corner to a dark spot surrounded by a bigger circle towards the upper left section. This double circle resembles an eye's pupil or a bullseye, prominent and intense in contrast with the more stylised and delicate thinness of the lines connecting the sinuous shapes of the closed mouths. The drawing has at the very top the English words 'walking around' typed in a plain typewriter's font, which could be considered a title or heading to the drawing in isolation, apart from its function as title to the subsequent Neruda poem. This spatial reference to the act of going for a walk serves to reinforce the movement evoked by the numerous mouths around the drawing, all connected to the focal circular shape, the starting point or destination of the alluded walk. In addition, the different sizes of the lips, diminishing as we move upwards from right to left and then right again from the circle upwards, also reinforce the sense of distance and perspective, simulating a bigger distance between the viewer and the smaller lips at the top. Also, the fact that the three smaller mouths at the top right are directly in contact with the circle suggests a gradual movement from the bottom upwards, situating the middle part of the drawing as a middle stage between the beginning and the end of the 'walk around'.

A multiplicity of meanings coalesces in the drawing. From a general perspective, there is a combination of the fictive movement implied by the lines and composition and the propositional movement signified in the linguistic element. To this combination must be added the sensory movement evoked by the multiple mouths and the eye-like dot whose potential sensory functions (i.e. the tactility of kissing, the sound of talking, the act of looking) are graphically interconnected by linking lines. Through a holistic vision then,

the broader composite meaning of all these elements exemplifies that ‘our bodily experiences motivate conceptualisation and are, therefore, expressed in all of our meaning systems’ (Borkent 2010: 148). This reinforces the argument that visual and verbal cues are not perceived as primarily distinct in this kind of artefact, but are blended to form a wider meaning. Lorca’s drawing offers a vision which moves past the barriers separating these diverse elements and blends them all together to convey a multilayered movement or journey both poetically meaningful and visually vivid. Borkent further posits that these types of ‘multimodal artefacts’ serve to demonstrate the syncretism between body and mind, which ‘motivates meaning through connections between perception and conception’ (2010: 148).

The multiplicity of mouths in ‘Labios (Walking around)’ can also be contrasted with the uniqueness of the central circle or dot, perhaps a representation of a single subject or object as opposed to other entities. If the circle is taken to be the ‘I’ in the drawing, the poetic voice if this were a poem, then the mouths would be the others, external individuals surrounding the ‘I’ with whom this entity communicates or interacts. The singularity of the circle makes it ‘other’ to the homogeneous mouths, all alike each other, but the walk enables the ‘I’ to interact with them, to travel from one to the next. In the drawing’s symbology, this walk around can be seen as the artist’s expression, the means by which communication is achieved, or at least aimed at. The multiplicity of perspectives represented by the mouths is in tune with the ambiguous and uncertain meaning of the drawing, challenging the possibility of a univocal interpretation. The lines connecting the elements in the drawing thus evoke the desire for human interaction as well, in the act of talking or kissing, or even emotional intimacy, sexual intercourse or friendship. However, the difference or otherness of the circular object in opposition to the mouths is palpable, so the movement or communication may be frustrated or impossible,

something which is reinforced by the use of an English sequence of words in the drawing. Despite it being taken from a poem title by Neruda and the fact that Lorca studied English during his time in New York, the use of a different language from his mother tongue suggests a break in communication or at least an added difficulty in understanding an interlocutor. It also resonates with the multiple mouths, talking agents whose interactions and communications paradoxically depend on language, whichever that may be.

Whether communication is achieved or not, the drawing nonetheless possesses a circular sense (evoked by the round composition, the homogeneity of the peripheral elements, the black dot surrounded by a circle and the implications of walking ‘around’) that leaves this question open-ended, since there is no starting or ending point, but rather a flowing motion mouth-circle-mouth implying a return to the beginning. Lorca thus presents an exploration of bodily communication (be it spoken, visual, tactile or spatial) which remains circular and therefore indeterminate and uncertain, transgressing logical and spatiotemporal norms and leaving the viewer with an unsettling sense of disorientation, precisely the effect that walking around (in circles or without sense of direction) usually has.

In terms of corporeal transgression, but this time through a more concrete depiction of the human body, another Argentinian example is ‘Material nupcial’ [Fig. 5]. The drawing depicts a male character that can be associated with the recurrent ‘sailor’ figures of other drawings and poems by Lorca, but is also reminiscent of Jean Cocteau’s graphic works, especially those from *Le livre blanc* (1928).<sup>63</sup> The eyes of the sailor are expressionless, vacant empty ovals, like those of a corpse; and his lips are closed together in a neutral gesture, neither smiling nor pouting. He is wearing a typical sailor’s cap with

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<sup>63</sup> Plaza Chillón cites an article published by Sebastián Gasch after Lorca’s 1927 exhibition in Barcelona, in which the art critic notices the parallels between Lorca’s drawings and other contemporary artists like Cocteau or Max Jacob, ‘en esa tendencia donde la plástica y la poesía se aúnan para traducir un “estado del alma por medio de ritmos de líneas y colores”’ (2008: 3).

a wider circular top and a long ribbon or tally tied around its base, with the long ends hanging loosely in opposite directions, one flying upwards and the other one falling down in a straight line touching the man's neck area. The other distinctive feature of the man's attire is the big triangular collar on his shirt with irregular ends on both sides, the right one extending diagonally to the upper right corner of the drawing, its tip touching the upper edge. The lower angle in the triangular collar goes down to his chest area, and the position of his elevated right hand, the only one visible in the drawing, makes it converge with the end of the collar. This accentuates the geometrical nature of the composition and also the disproportion between the man's broad shoulders, arms and chest and his smaller head, slightly tilted to the left and thus creating a perpendicular angle with the slanted horizontal line of the shoulders. The man's body is traversed diagonally from left to right by a flower with an elongated stem, positioned in such a way that the flower itself is coming out of one of his eyes, whilst the stem line goes through the eye cavity and reemerges at the back of his head, travelling all the way down his body through his open right hand and ending in one of the two groups of words in the drawing (the other one being the typewritten title at the top). The sentence at the bottom, resembling three lines of verse or a short message, is formed by the same discontinued line that formed the flower and its long stem, although this line is also split into two. This compositional feature serves to physically blend the handwritten lines —the linguistic element— with the visual element of the drawing, which indicates the intended combination of both meanings to create a broader one. The lines at the bottom read 'Solo el misterio | nos hace vivir | solo el misterio'. The other linguistic element in the drawing is placed at the top of the drawing, a title with the typed words 'Material nupcial', which in turn refers the drawing to Neruda's corresponding poem. Finally, a series of short dark vertical lines are arranged in a group around the man's neck area, on top of the bigger collar flap on the

right side, almost below his face. The short lines are slightly curved, which gives them a sense of movement, similar to droplets or raindrops, although they are unusually long. Their arrangement in a more or less homogeneous group but not too close to each other reinforces their vertical movement downwards and also conveys some texture. They are also thicker than the other lines in the drawing, which highlights their presence in contrast with the sailor's body.

The composition emphasises the contrast between geometrical figures made of sharp, finite and straight lines and the curved, sinewy lines which form the piercing flower and the handwritten words. In turn, these words resembling a dedication or caption are opposed to the typed words at the top, regular and symmetrical. The triangular sailor's collar, the circular sailor's cap top and the slanted straight line of the man's shoulders similarly clash with the curved shape of the hanging cap ribbon and the lines forming the curvy contour of the man's arms and upper body. The triangle's left side is interrupted at the bottom near the man's hand by a sinewy line superimposed on the original straight line, which suggests a tear or scratch in the fabric and also mirrors the handwritten lines. All these compositional contrasts evoke the existence of two opposing sentiments or poles in the drawing: proportion and rupture, symmetry and asymmetry, firm geometrical lines and sinuous, vibrating, handwritten lines. The harmony inherent in geometrical symmetry is constantly disrupted by Lorca's particular use of the line, which creates distortions giving the drawing profundity and irregularity and thus a more complex and disturbing appearance. The scission produced by the flower and its long stem takes place on the man's body, which is pierced by the plant and thus cut in half, accentuating the asymmetry of the two halves on either side of the stem. This positions the sailor's body in a middle stage between the background and the foreground of the drawing and between his contact with the flower and his separation from it. The flower becomes part of his

body but is also a separate entity conveying movement against it, altering, dividing and wounding it. The idea of the wound thus becomes central to the drawing in that it is the site in which the sailor's corporeality is threatened, prompting an interrogation into his emotional, psychological and even ontological state which offers vagueness and mystery as its only revealed solutions. The handwritten lines insist that it is that mystery which makes us (and the sailor) alive, although his vacant demeanour, his wounded body and his asymmetrical position point to death and decomposition instead. This is relevant in light of *duende*, in that the wound can be linked to artistic expression and its creative qualities redefining norms that it has previously transgressed, a destructive/constructive scission opening up a diversity of significations that can be ascribed to the drawing.

On the other hand, the words created by the stem of the plant at the bottom of the composition play with this multiplicity of meanings as well. Mystery can signify that which is unknown or cannot be known, but the poet insists that it is mystery, in other words the desire to know or comprehend, that makes us live. Lorca thus positivises the middle stage between knowledge and the unknown, a boundary space mirroring that scission or wound created by the plant on the man's body. The special harmony and contrast between the words and the image reinforce their transmedial effect, such that language acquires an imagistic nature within the drawing, also positivising the ambivalent and liminal state of the sailor's body in its motion towards life ('nos hace vivir') and towards death (his corpse eyes, the bleeding wound, his corporeal fusion with the inanimate plant).

The figure of the sailor has often been connected to Lorca's *Ode to Walt Whitman* and other poems from *Poet in New York*, especially in reference to images of homoeroticism and homosexual culture during the years when Lorca visited the Big Apple. To this must be added the also contemporary erotic drawings of sailors by Cocteau



and the early paintings by Dalí which Lorca witnessed at Madrid's Residencia.<sup>64</sup> The stylised image of the sailor's sculptured body in 'Material Nupcial' creates an eroticised vision making him the object of the gaze, which combines with the reference to Neruda's poem title. The Chilean poet explores a lustful and oneiric scene in which he sees the image of a young girl in a photograph (suggested by the lines 'miro una niña de papel y luna') (Neruda 2000: 80) and he then describes his brutal physical and psychological response verging on sexual violence. In Lorca's drawing, the also voyeuristic representation of the handsome young sailor situates the artist's gaze in an ambiguous position, either looking lasciviously at a dead body or inflicting physical pain on a living one. The sailor's image flaunts his muscular arms and broad shoulders (accentuated by the contorted position of his upper body and tilted head) and his delicate handsome face and sinuous lips. However, his vacant eyes and the foregrounding of the long flower stem piercing his eye and cutting his body signal a darker meaning. The 'niña de papel y luna' and the sailor's body are both eroticised, but both visions combine harmonious stylised lines and details with ominous allusions to violence and death. The title of the drawing and the poem adds to this disconcerting sense in its double evocation of sexual desire and gender roles. The nuptial material refers to a young woman and a young man respectively, so the erotic and penetrating gaze crosses gender boundaries as it crosses media ones, but disturbingly it also swings from sex to violence, from love to rape, from desire to death. The use of the word 'nupcial' thus carries an ironic sense: neither the poet nor the artist seem to have traditional marriage in mind while admiring their respective love objects and their beguiling bodies being penetrated and destructured, rather they are revelling in their heterodox and unsettling carnal desires. The fact that the same title serves its

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<sup>64</sup> Lahuerta (2010: 149) identifies recurrent pictorial motifs, such as the sailor and Venus, which were amply developed by Dalí and other contemporary artists Lorca came in contact with or studied during his years at La Residencia.

purpose about both male and female objects (and therefore about homosexual and heterosexual subjects) situates ‘Material nupcial’ in an ambiguous and queer terrain mirroring the mystery that envelops the sailor and that Lorca verbally and visually inscribes in the drawing. The complexities of the drawing’s gaze are accentuated by the indeterminate psychological and ontological state of the sailor and the presence of death alluded by the piercing flower—which is in turn reminiscent of the drawing ‘Busto de hombre muerto’ in which plants grow from the eponymous dead man’s body (who has identical empty eyes). The group of short lines below the sailor’s face also resemble the well-known drops of other drawings evoking blood pouring out. Even though they are displaced from the supposed centre of the wound in this drawing, they are parallel to the flower itself, which also appears to be expelling liquid, possibly bleeding too. Through the lines ‘Solo el misterio | nos hace vivir | solo el misterio’, the mysterious middle stage between knowledge and the unknown—or between the language of the Symbolic and the inexpressible Real—can then be read as an intermediate stage between life and death, the state in which the sailor has been immortalised and which the wound has opened. The mystery present in Lorca’s drawing is linked to the multiple layers of meaning inscribed in it, the visual transgression of symmetry in his use of the line, the immediacy added by the handwriting style as opposed to the typed words, the scission to the boundaries in the sailor’s body and the poetic meaning of the lines. Furthermore, its queer aspect refers not only to the homoeroticism in the sailor’s stylised anatomy as the gendered object of the artist’s gaze; but also to the drawing’s transgression of corporeality and symmetry to offer a liminal and unstable state announcing the body’s deconstruction and its opposition to the norms that it tries to resist.

A further transgression of corporeality occurs in a free-standing drawing not paired with any of Neruda’s poems. ‘Cabezas cortadas de Federico García Lorca y Pablo

Neruda' [Fig. 6] is, as the title explains, a depiction of two severed heads resembling those of Lorca and Neruda but with barely no facial features except Lorca's eyes —two big ovals coloured in black— and nose and Neruda's eyebrows and small eyes. The two heads are bleeding small drops of blood at the bottom, where they seem to be resting on a table. At the very top, on the right hand corner, a waning moon with an open eye in its centre overlooks the scene. The explanatory words at the bottom of the drawing also give some details about its creation: 'este patético dibujo fue realizado la tarde del martes 13 de 1934 en la ciudad de Santa María de los Buenos Aires, así como todos los demás dibujos', which makes the drawing act as an introduction to the whole collection. The description of the drawing as 'patético' —inspiring pity— plays out the idea of Lorca as a self-critic of his work, but also aptly implies a sense of *pathos* in that extreme emotions are being explored in the drawings and are meant to be inspired in the viewer. The two authors' heads introducing the book are seen as graphic instances of the process involved in its creation, a symbol of the embodiment of artistic expression in the two poets' work. As Acton suggests, the spontaneity inherent in a drawing always alludes to the craftsmanship of the artist, his hand-eye coordination and the immediacy of the drawing as opposed to a painting. This translates into the viewer 'witnessing the many layers, the twists and turns and ultimately the mysteries of the creative process' (2009: 201). The more immediate and spontaneous nature of drawing reveals a faster creative process than painting, involving the hand-eye-brain coordination and the craftsmanship of the author all combined and syncretised. The book of poems would be Neruda's life and blood poured into his work, as would the drawings be Lorca's. For if creativity comes from within the artist's physical boundaries and his blood, this drawing shows the necessity of the ultimate wound, the artist's decapitation, to extract it and reconstruct it into the image or the poem. The severed heads are thus being morphed in the drawing, eliminating the

separation between artist and image, between creation and destruction and between intellectual conceptualisation and materialisation of the work of art.

Lorca's final drawings show that he was gradually moving towards an aesthetics of corporeal fragments. Within the Argentina group of drawings there are some signs of this preference, but the depiction of female bodies is nonetheless rare, which makes the next drawing all the more fascinating. 'Venus' (preceding the poem 'Agua sexual') [Fig. 7] depicts a female figure whose sex explodes into a multitude of little hands extending in all directions through thin sinewy lines. Her body is drawn in two separate blocks: her head and long flowing hair occupy the top left part of the drawing, insinuating movement downwards to the bottom right part. Her upper body down to her pubic area consists only of her breasts, handless arms, hips and upper thighs, a gap opening around her absent neck area (which disconnects her head from the rest of her body) and her absent legs. Her pubic hair, which is formed of a series of darker line strokes and sinewy lines which then extend outwards, constitutes the focal point in the composition of the drawing and is situated in the central section of the page. Lines coming out of her mouth traverse her body to the right edges of the drawing, creating the words 'amor' (twice on the right top part) and 'luna' (on the right bottom part).

The sketched body of the Venus, because of its contour and its construction as three basic circular shapes (her head, her breast and waist, and her hips and thighs) suggests an emphasis on female sexuality, evoking on the one hand the famous handless sculpture of Venus by Milo and on the other a classic nude painting in which the sexual features of the female body are foregrounded and eroticised. However, the contrast of this conventional subject-matter with the unusual little hands coming out of the woman's genitalia strikes the viewer's attention and challenges expectations. The woman's face presents a vacant expression, with two empty ovals as eyes and thick closed lips, and her

fragmented body seems to be immobile and passive, incapable of any action. This passivity accentuates the frantic movement evoked by the multiple little hands extending in all directions and the sexual connotations of the hands, the woman's sex and the twin 'amor' words. Her desire is overpowering, exerting force and control over her still body. However, the drawing hinges on the horror this desire provokes, on its aggressiveness imposed on the woman's body. Her facial expression and posture are a mixture of void and horror, suspended between two poles which become signified in the drawing by the words on opposite sides. Whilst 'amor' suggests the woman's emotions and her agency in the erotic meaning evoked, the word 'luna' is also leaving her lips to invoke the darkness and mysteriousness of the moon's femininity and deathly overtones.

In Neruda's poem, images of liquids flowing become multiplied and transform into objects forcing themselves upon the human body, penetrating and harming it but also stirring it from its idle, observant and passive state:

Rodando a goterones solos,  
 a gotas como dientes,  
 a espesos goterones de mermelada y sangre,  
 rodando a goterones,  
 cae el agua,  
 como una espada en gotas,  
 como un desgarrador río de vidrio,  
 cae mordiendo,  
 golpeando el eje de la simetría, pegando en las costuras  
 del alma,  
 rompiendo cosas abandonadas, empapando lo oscuro. (2000: 82)

The water in the title may well be affecting the body of the woman in the drawing both as a piercing agent and as a revitalising one. Her desire seems awakened but her

destruction is evoked by bodily issue. The depiction of her genital area is purposely exaggerated through darker and violent lines, excessively flying in all directions and ambiguously representing exuberant pubic hair or gushing streams of blood (both epitomes of her sexual and reproductive capabilities). Carnal desire and corporeal pain are fused, which conversely problematises the agency of the group of hands: are these meant to represent her desire flowing out to embrace her carnality or are they a sign that her body is unavoidably subjected to others as a sexual object? In a suggestive play of opposites, Lorca veils the resolution of this conundrum, instead offering a vision of the Venus which incorporates eroticism, female empowerment and motherhood but simultaneously evokes unsettling images of passivity, objectification, rape and horror. The viewer is left to adopt these visions as fluid components of an uncertain whole, flowing like water to reach, in Neruda's words, 'inside one's bones' ('Veo pasar sus aguas a través de los huesos') (2000: 84).

Within the Argentina collection 'Solo la muerte' [Fig. 8] can be considered a climactic piece owing to its condensed exploration of the desire/death dichotomy under Lorca's particular pictorial rubric. The drawing contains an amalgam of Lorca's recurrent pictorial motifs in what could be described as a multi-perspectival depiction of a human body. In a collage-like fashion, the artist portrays a disproportionate and asymmetrical creature with a combination of human features and non-figurative elements in an irregular juxtaposition. In addition, the setting of the drawing brings together concrete recognisable objects and abstract shapes and forms merged seamlessly into a quasi-ordinary background scene, depicting a human character going for a walk in a domestic environment. Multiple little hands come out of various parts of the figure's body: from one of the figure's heads, with long sinewy lines simulating its hair; from its central part, reaching towards the top and bottom of the drawing; and from the contours of its bottom

part signalling the movement of its human legs wide apart, caught in the moment of stepping forward onto a semi-circular patio with two plant pots on its sides. The creature's second head is shaped like a face with its eyes closed, encircled by a longer pair of lines coming out of the figure's ribcage and floating towards the upper left corner of the drawing, like a balloon. A further series of long thin lines ending in small hands emerges from the same central point in the ribcage, situated in the central section of the drawing. Two of the small hands, each on either side of the body, are holding long-stemmed flowers, one of which has what seems like an open eye in one of its stem leaves. The most unusual motif is situated at the centre of the drawing and becomes the focal point of the composition. It is a group of dark curved lines forming a dark symbol which resembles a scar or a body mark, due to its prominence in depth, the width of the lines and its uniqueness in the drawing (it is very similar to that of the corpse figure in 'Busto de hombre muerto'). Situated at the 'heart' of the creature (and also as a heart of sorts), its central position accentuates the contorted pose of the figure, its top part extending left and creating a diagonal line across the drawing towards the right leg, elevated behind its other leg and reaching the lower part of the picture. Another diagonal line in the opposite direction is created through two additional elongated lines coming out of the figure's scar and its middle section, these ending in shorter lines with dotted tips mirroring small roots or branches. This complicated asymmetry gives the drawing an energetic dynamism in which the straight geometrical lines forming the creature's skeleton and upper body contrast with the extending curved lines that explode outwards in all directions. It also highlights the constructedness of the creature's body, which surpasses logical limits and appears as de-centred and deformed. Lorca's use of the line elegantly establishes a marked distinction between contrasting shapes superimposed and combined, whilst also

conveying a sense of chaos and randomness in the drawing's unusual and excessive juxtapositions.

The drawing hinges on the figure's metamorphic state, in that the non-matching incongruous elements superimposed on its body present the figure's corporeality as an unfinished entity being recreated. Gender and sex marks have been eliminated and are practically non-existent, considering that the figure's long hair and one of its faces are not specific or determinate enough to be defined as male or female. Sensory transgression is another interesting element of the drawing. The creature's sight is decentred in that its human elements (its two faces) are both blinded, whilst the open eye on the flower's stem becomes its sighted counterpart staring at it from the edge of the composition. Also, the creature's body lacks arms *per se*, so the multitude of extending hands serve as its tactile tools, together with its obvious spatial movement represented in its walking legs. The creature's speaking abilities are also transgressed; for while one of the heads has a closed mouth, the other one lacks a mouth altogether and instead has two horizontal lines formed of shorter lines or dots which extend from its mouth area towards the hand on the right side holding the flower. This head's 'impaired' senses are thus substituted by other sensory connotations in a sort of synaesthesia: the non-existent mouth does however 'communicate' through the lines coming out of it which reach its hand and the flower. Conversely, the flower's position facing the creature's head suggests both these lines reaching it as 'visual sound' and the flower's fragrance travelling back to the creature's non-existent nose as 'visual smell'.

All of these instances hinge on the purposeful confusion and disruption of representation. The creature's human senses are, like its constructed body, repositioned in a weird and unusual space within the drawing, transgressing the viewer's logical expectations and preconceived ideas and thus resisting the norms that would make it



intelligible. This can be read as Lorca's queer treatment of the senses, for the drawing replaces the creature's bodily and sensory abilities by non-normative sensory agents, while also questioning the very system of binaries from which the creature in the drawing strives to escape. As Weinberg notes, queer 'is not a matter of specific sexual identities', which are made decidedly elusive in Lorca's drawing. He adds that instead, '[t]he world is queer, because it is known only through representations that are fragmentary and in themselves queer. Their meanings are always relative, a matter of relationships and constructions' (Weinberg 1996: 12).

The relationships in 'Solo la muerte' are so incongruous that attempting to draw from them consistent and faithful representations seems futile if not impossible, precisely because they expose the creature's constructions (its body, its life/death, its gender, its senses, even its humanity) as relative, fluid and in constant (trans)formation. Hence, only death (as expressed in the title) is the way to experience the creature's resistance to be identified with certainty, for it announces the death of meaning, of the assumed distinction between being and non-being and even of the reliability of the drawing itself. Death inevitably invades the scene alerting the viewer to the creature's fragile existence and its position invoking both (re-)creation and destruction. The figure's sensory elements (sight, tactility, smell, sound) and its spatial movement hinge on life energies, thus proving it is indeed alive despite its ominous and grotesque appearance. Conversely, though, its imminent fragmentation and constructed quality announce this death as an unwonted and unsettling creature which resembles a Grim Reaper incarnation. Unresolved, unfinished, alive yet dying, queer in its form and corporeality as well as in its movement and relation to its environment, 'Solo la muerte's unsettling character is undoubtedly one of Lorca's pictorial masterpieces despite (and probably because of) its unconventional and seemingly random and unpolished appearance.

There are a few Argentinian drawings not belonging to the collaboration with Neruda which were drawn in Buenos Aires around the same time and serve as transitional pieces between this journey and Lorca's final years: 'Busto de marinero con flechas', 'Rua das Gaveas' and 'Marinero del "Amor"' [Figs. 9-11]. All these drawings represent the well-known sailor figure but start resembling the more abstract later works and their concentration on detailed bodily fragments. Examining these drawings, it is noticeable that the more idealised portrait-like sailors of Lorca's early drawings have devolved into sombre and disturbing characters, all of which are presented on the brink of corporeal fragmentation and lack complete and finite bodies. The doubling of hands and the piercing lines of 'Marinero del "Amor"', the arrows and dark vacant eyes of 'Busto de Marinero con flechas' and the severed bleeding hands present in 'Rua das Gaveas' will be explored as separate phenomena in Lorca's 1935-36 drawings along with the root systems also present in these three works.

Lorca's treatment of corporeality is thus becoming more sharply directed towards issues of human connection or the lack thereof. The human senses prove to be the tools to signify this connectivity graphically, starting from sight and image and moving to tactility and sound. Also, the boundaries between bodies and their surrounding realities and even their very finitude and fixity are challenged and displaced, favouring visions of blood as the palpable sign of deconstruction and decomposition. The wounds that have been announced so far in his drawings will become recurrent signs of infinite potentialities when depicted closely and in abstract isolation.

### **Final Drawings: Abstraction, Arrows, and the Power of Blood**

The group of drawings from 1935-1936 is quite varied in style and imagery, although as Lorca's final graphic works these are perhaps his best-known. Back in the late 1920s,

Lorca's friends Dalí and Sebastián Gasch already talked about the poetic plasticity of his first exhibited drawings and the pure intuition with which he attempted his graphic works, praising the way that inspiration drove the author's hand: '[u]na mano que se abandona. Una mano que se deja hacer, que no opone resistencia, que ni sabe ni quiere saber a dónde es conducida' (Lahuerta 2010: 251). The higher level of abstraction of Lorca's later drawings, their focus on smaller details and decontextualised fragments and their shocking and unusual themes make them more opaque and polysemic while confirming the importance of the poetic meaning synthesised in them and of the intuitive abandonment and independence that these abstract details acquire. However, they all share a preoccupation with processes of deconstruction, fracturing and physical disintegration, phenomena which will ascribe restorative and life-giving qualities to images of wounds and blood.

'Manos cortadas' [Fig. 12] is one of Lorca's last graphic works and one of the best-known to date.<sup>65</sup> The drawing depicts two hands that appear to have been cut off and therefore have drops of blood dripping out of them towards the bottom of the drawing. There is also a squiggly but uninterrupted line that goes from the wrist of the hand on the left to the bottom of the drawing and in turn ends into an extending system of lines which split into smaller ones, resembling the ramification of the roots of a plant or tree. This line follows a circular trajectory that travels around the hand on the left side and across the

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<sup>65</sup> There are a number of variations on this drawing, some of them not even catalogued, which appear accompanying various artefacts, such as Lorca's autographs, book edition covers, dedications to friends, etc. Two of them are significantly similar to the piece analysed here: 'Manos cortadas' variation (ca.1935-1936, ink on the title page of *Llanto por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías*, a first edition copy dedicated to Manuel Muntañola Tey in Barcelona) contains the severed hands but this time there is a bleeding rose next to them instead of growing roots. A third variation, 'La mano', is also very similar to 'Manos cortadas' in that one severed hand this time dominates the drawing. In contrast with the other two versions, though, this hand does not appear to be dripping blood, but a group of straight lines simulating roots come out of it, reaching the bottom of the drawing. Also, the hand is not open, but has a firm grasp on what looks like a thin branch from which little red fruits, cherries or red grapes, spring out of horizontal branches in turn. The tips of these branches end in long green leaves which become purple peacock feathers. This last version is uncatalogued.

drawing to the hand on the right side, circling around it in a zigzag movement. The hand on the left is also a left hand, its thumb being placed on its right side as if it was being looked at from above, whilst the hand on the right side seems to be a right hand, but its thumb is hidden from view so that only four fingers are shown. The line that connects both hands creating a curved parabola around them does not actually reach the hand on the right, but only touches upon it before ending in the dividing roots at the bottom of the drawing. Both hands are extended and facing upwards, giving the impression of reaching for something, wanting to touch even after they have been severed from a human body.

The drawing can thus be considered more an image of empty spaces than full ones, of absence more than presence. It leaves the viewer uncertain about what is not represented and escapes the drawing's frame; it prompts questions about what could be missing and why. The elements in the drawing, albeit figurative and identifiable, interact in an unusual way, which contributes to the drawing's shocking appearance. The hands are seemingly simple depictions of human tactility, but they are free-floating, missing a body or cut off from it. The droplets coming out of them suggest that they are bleeding, although because it is a black and white drawing, they could also resemble tears or raindrops, motifs which by now look familiar in relation to previous drawings. Either way, the relationship between the hands and their dripping liquid particles evokes a moment in time which is absent from the drawing. If the hands were indeed severed, as evidence from other drawings seems to suggest, this violent scene has already happened, it belongs to a past time. If hands are severed from their corresponding arms, not only would this cause immense pain, but it would constitute a barbaric act of violence, possibly of murder. The movement in the drawing, however, suggests a different kind of aftermath to this event, as the hands are stretched out, almost reaching for something, and the line that circles around them seems to be in the midst of an energetic movement,

growing into roots, in other words, alive. The drawing would then be a metaphoric passage in which the limits of life and death are interwoven. Not only are the hands alive, but they are creating life, growing roots that in turn will keep them alive. The moment of creation is inevitably related to a moment of suffering, the painful event in which they were cut off from their original roots, human veins which connected them with a human body. The blood being expelled from them suggests this violent act, but their suffering has nonetheless produced something new in the drawing, another form of life expressed in the growing roots which are almost refusing to die.

Also, as parts of a missing whole entity, their status and purpose remain unresolved and uncertain. If they belonged to a body, they would now be incomplete fragments separated from their whole. However, as free-standing entities without a body, they invite the viewer into an imagined reality where hands are a whole signifying the power of physicality, the potentialities inherent in creation. Hands can touch, they can hit, they can break, but they can also write, they can draw, they can paint, they can play a musical instrument or mould a sculpture, to name only a few activities. Lacking other parts attached to the hands, they can attain infinite powers without accounting for any other governing entity, such as the intellect or language. If this was the artist's intention, then these hands could be conveying a sense of automatic creation, art in its purest form disembodied from any logical restraints. 'El poeta', Lorca said in one of his letters, 'tiene la sensación vaga de que va a una cacería nocturna en un bosque lejanísimo' (Cavanaugh 1995: 21), implying a haphazard violent act in which creation needs to be hunted down by the artist and appropriated into his/her hands.

In conjunction with this, the roots clearly allude to the idea of connection, of entities searching for a state of contact with other entities. In the case of plants, their contact with the earth through their roots signifies their life, their organic search for

nutrition and their survival. Also, their resemblance to human veins by their association with the blood drops brings back the connection to the human body. Thus, the Freudian erotic drive is juxtaposed in the drawing to the imminence of the death drive and signals the inevitable coexistence of both processes. Conversely, in Bakhtin's terms, the grotesque depiction of the boundaries connecting the body with the outside world hinges on the points of coalescence of existence and mortality. Whilst the severed hands resonate with a murderous bodily scission, the roots and the dripping blood evoke vitality and growth, giving the whole composition a shockingly ambivalent meaning. If the roots in the drawing are taken to symbolise the inevitability of a human connection with the earth, the rootedness of man's existence into Nature, they might also be showing the poet's expression of physical necessity. The union of man to body is inescapable, it is part of the inherently human life drive, but this drive is coexistent with its death counterpart, evidenced in the drawing by the dual life-death associations of blood.

'Manos cortadas' also evokes issues of authorship and craftsmanship in art. The artist's hands are free, cut off from the intellect or any rules or norms governing his or her technique. There is freedom and a sense of infinite creativity in this disconnection, in the fact that the will of the artist dominates his creation and the value of the work of art lies in the physical act of producing it single-handedly. However, Lorca seemed to avoid ascribing his art to well-known surrealist creative modes or techniques like automatisms or unconsciousness, instead defending the value of hard work and 'rootedness' in reason and logic. This could account for the connecting lines that 'root' the hands in the drawing to a source (perhaps the artist's spirit, his *duende*, his blood) which, concrete or abstract and stable or not, guides the artist's hand in his 'hunt-like' process of creation.

The drawing offers an evocation of the sense of touch, but it hinges predominantly on a lack of tactility, two pairs of hands floating but not touching anything. They are open, expectant, reaching for something, desiring to touch. The moment depicted lacks closure or completion, since the intended action of touching is not achieved. All that is left is the movement implied in them, the moment of reaching out. There are thus two main arguments that may be derived from the recurrent representation of hands in Lorca's drawings. First, the relationship of human hands with the artistic process seems to be self-evident, since ideas of craftsmanship and physical creation lie at the root of every artwork. The hand creates the drawing, it is the single most important tool for artistic creation. The immediacy of drawing as opposed to the process of creating a painting gives us a greater insight into the artist's development of an idea. In the drawing there is a translation of what the eye sees into the movements of the hand. Time seems to be a factor too: a drawing is created in a shorter period of time, so its immediacy speaks of the impending threat of time passing and the capacity of the drawing to capture a still moment in time. Subsequently, giving the hand itself a leading role in the act of creation ties in with the idea of automatism associated with Surrealism. It may be argued that the protagonist role given to the hand implies the Surrealist tendency to automatic creation, abandoning reason and logic to let the hand lead the artist. However, it has been noted by scholars that Lorca himself was reticent to ascribe his work to this tendency, claiming that the dreaming state was to him not a good approach to art. Nonetheless, the tactile connotations of hands do allow Lorca to explore intuitive and sensory aspects of artistic creation, like its immediacy, craftsmanship, embodiment and materiality. Much like the severed heads from his Argentinian collection wished to present the two artists' work laid bare humbly before the viewer, Lorca here presents the work of his hands as an offering

of sorts, his craftsmanship and his ‘handiwork’ as the medium and result of his aesthetic theory.

Moreover, it is obvious that hands are related to tactility and human interaction, an idea that is actually not too far off the previous debate around automatism. Cavanaugh sees the representation of hands as an allusion to the act of reaching out, touching, searching for something (2003: 195). A sense of rootedness is reinforced by the unusual combination of hands with thin lines resembling root systems, in which the ideas of connection and disconnection are explored. The wound is arguably an image tangentially opposite to rootedness. Putting down roots means creating a bond with another entity, being in contact with it, even fusing with it. By contrast, a wound is a scission, a separation of different pieces of a whole. In parallel, rootedness may be associated with life, the nurturing and growing of the plant in the earth, which ultimately produces a sense of union and wholeness. The wound, then, is in this sense alluding to death, to the end of nurturing and the abrupt stop of the growing process and ultimately leading to destruction and decay. However, blood becomes the visual nexus between life and death, evoking both the fracturing physical wound and the restorative and transformative space of desire, opening up a site of (re)creation.

A lesser-known late drawing is ‘Figura de pájaro’ [Fig. 13], which adds Lorca’s idea of human corporeal fragmentation to a halfway process of visual abstraction set in the animal world this time. The bird figure from the title supersedes the human form in this fascinating drawing, consisting of a slender vertical line ending at the top in a triangular shape forming the bird’s long beak with an open eye on its upper end; a series of elongated bifurcating lines curving downwards to form the bird’s feathers on its head; and a big feathered tail or wing towards its centre formed of a group of long thicker lines falling to the bottom right of the composition. The long vertical line forming the basis of



the animal's body, situated towards the left of the drawing, constitutes the main axis creating a diagonal movement from the top left to the bottom right of the composition, which ends in Lorca's signature at the bottom of the frame. In the most marginal and empty part of the drawing —the bottom left— there are two proportionally minute hands (which could also be paws or even feet) attached to the main axis and pinned or pierced by two short lines ending in dots, the incongruity of which is reinforced by a rectangular shape created through intermittent lines emerging from the area where the small hands are and intersecting with the upper body of the animal. The bird's abstracted corporeality is simultaneously stylised by its elongated curved lines and made incongruous by its basic geometrical features (as well as the insertion of an attached human element) forming yet invading its body. The combination of these two types of lines —straight and intermittent versus circular and elongated— inevitably evidences the awkwardly constructed and irregular quality of the bird. This is further problematised by the insertion of thicker short lines ending in thick dots and ink stains scattered all over the animal's head feathers, some of them emerging from the original feather lines and others splattered on top of the drawing. The movement created by the drops and stains disturbs the otherwise static and rather proportional figure of the bird, creating an amalgam of blurry darker areas and a reverse downwards movement to the left against the original direction of the composition.

The drawing's focus on the human form is thus shifted (though not eliminated) to accommodate the prominence of the animal's body, but the interaction of both is still palpable. The pins on the small hands mirror the intense ink stains and dots on the upper part of the animal's body, evoking drops of blood simultaneously forming the bird's feathers and blurring and distorting them. In properly grotesque fashion, the animal element is fused with the human to signify a process of shocking and unlike mutation or transformation, punctuated, as is usual in Lorquian terms, by the engendering power of

the wound and its close visual ally: blood. The blood stains or drops splattered on the animal's body signal the function of the wound to alter the incongruous elements being fused in the composition, animating the stasis of the bird and the hands by creating a violent movement conducive to grotesque metamorphosis as well as to a stylised study of corporeal fracturing and deconstruction. The thin lines ending in thick dots also resemble those of Lorca's earlier drawings 'San Sebastián' and 'Pavo Real' (both ca. 1927) [Figs. 14-15], in which the focus on arrows piercing the flesh adopts this abstract form. This motif is very relevant to Lorca's final drawings, especially the 'Rostros con flechas'.

The series of faces with arrows, featured in many of Lorca's autographs, were exercised as independent drawings on various occasions, especially in his final years. 'Rostro de las dos flechas' and 'Rostro con flechas' [Figs. 16-17] are two well-known examples. Their graphic brevity and immediacy and their small size tie in with the inclusion of a verbal component, the author's signature. Issues of selfhood and authorship are mixed in with the visual-verbal interactions in them, suggesting a playful coalescence between Lorca the author and the faces, although their resemblance to Lorca is vague. Are they self-portraits or *commedia dell'arte* figures? Their clownish appearance incorporates the ludic and the grotesque: smiling and crying at the same time like a Pierrot would, but also two destructured and unfinished bodies whose flesh is being pierced. The artificiality derived from both traditions envelops the faces so that it becomes ironically unclear whether they are meant to be autographs or stand-alone pieces, private self-portraits intended as a gift or artworks to be deciphered. As usual, this duplicity is unresolved, which makes the drawings even more intriguing.

The relatively simple composition of 'Rostro de las dos flechas' consists of a half-oval describing the contour of a human face and pointing upwards via the two arrows in which the extremes end. These two arrows in turn present three dark points each, one on

each end of the arrow's triangular shape. The only element constituting the facial expression in the image is a human mouth, with thick sinuous lips closed in a half-smile which moves upwards to the right side, thus accentuating the movement of the right arrow, proportionally longer and extending further upwards in the drawing. Dark drops fall downwards across the featureless face and the mouth, dripping towards the bottom of the drawing like tears or blood drops.

The apparent simplicity of the composition thus opens up the scope of its interpretation, fluctuating between figurative and abstract elements. The tears can be read as an expression of anguish and melancholia, although their ambiguous darkness might be connected to the wounding capabilities of a figurative arrow, a motif that evokes Lorca's earlier 'San Sebastián' drawings. The points surrounding the arrows might be marking their entry points into the flesh, evoking the pierced body and its subsequent bleeding or emotional reaction to pain with tears. Moreover, the static nature of the dark circles emphasises the artificiality and abstraction of the wounding moment, thus suggesting a separation from the logical laws of time and space, as if the moment of the wound were frozen in time.

There are various drawings by Lorca developing the idea of Saint Sebastian, the martyr being pierced by arrows. The least figurative of them, which resembles his later face-arrow drawings, was produced in 1927 [Fig. 14], and its depiction relates to a dialogue Lorca had with Salvador Dalí for some time about the figure of the well-known saint and its aesthetic implications (Lahuerta 2010: 239-250). It concentrates on the act of the wound, on a group of lines with arrows which generate the composition and movement in the drawing. This group of straight lines all end in a dark circle of ink, pointing in different directions. In the centre of the drawing, there is a human eye and a circle with another dot in the middle, like a bullseye. The whole scene of the martyrdom

is reduced to a suggestive image in which the central point is the violent moment of wounding, the stabbing of the saint's body and the suffering implied. However, there is no dripping blood in the drawing, the moment of violence is frozen or crystallised in time. The emotional implications of the idea of martyrdom are also sublimated and transformed into an abstract image, which suggests both a dehumanisation of the mythical event and also a stylisation of the act of physical and emotional pain. Very much like 'San Sebastián', 'Rostro de las dos flechas' combines the irrational, illogical and abstracted concentration of the artist on the moment of wounding (devoid of time, space and form) with the emotional and melancholy state evoked by the figurative elements in the image, such as the tears falling or the blood dripping, both signs of embodiment, humanisation and mortality. This, in addition to the ambiguous smile on the face, creates a complex sense of fluidity combining pleasure and pain and creation and destruction. The combination of all these elements paradoxically contrasts the simplicity and immediacy of the drawing, its middle stage between concreteness and abstraction and its mixture of naïvety, playfulness and interpretative complexity.

'Rostro con flechas' [Fig. 17] presents a similar level of abstraction and a series of recurrent motifs but seems slightly more figurative than the previous drawing. The face in this instance presents more complete features, such as a nose, an open eye with elongated eyelashes falling to one side and a slightly more expressive mouth. The contours of the face end in upwards arrows again, but this time so do the nose, the eye and the chin. The latter ends in two opposite arrows surrounded by dark dots, which create a symmetrical axis contrasting the slanted and asymmetrical position and features of the rest of the face. At the top of the drawing, black droplets fall down from the figure's forehead above its open eye, but their location in the face makes it difficult to establish whether they are tears, blood drops or raindrops. The multiple facial arrows also intermingle and therefore

their ends point to a multitude of directions, creating a further sense of displacement and asymmetry. The drawing's excessive combination of abstraction and concreteness thus renders the limits of the figure's corporeality unclear and incongruous, deceiving the viewer and constantly interrupting perception. The figure's head is incomplete but sufficiently drawn to be identified as human, yet the superimposition of abstract lines creates a sense of deconstruction and therefore constructedness, such that the face becomes incongruous and grotesque. Its vacant expression is contrasted by the long and sinuous lines that emerge from the eye's side, which add expressivity and further ambiguity (this time related to sex and gender distinctions).

Considering the idea of Saint Sebastian's martyrdom and its much debated homoerotic gaze, 'Rostro con flechas' (following in the footsteps of Lorca's 1927 abstract rendition of the martyr's scene) similarly explores the aesthetics of the wound but it moves past the notion of sex and gender binary distinctions. The faces in both 'Arrows' drawings problematise the erotic/deadly qualities of the phallic object piercing the flesh by not offering distinct sex and gender marks and thus opening up the coalescence of desire and mortality to a universal, non-normative area. The focus on the pleasure/pain fluidity supersedes the identity of the faces, questioning the process of perception as rendering univocally gendered meanings. The viewer is prompted to wonder whether the notion of gender itself is at all relevant to interpret the drawings, since the gender uncertainty of the faces (especially the latter) and the prominent focus on the wounding moment suggest a universal vision of desire and mortality superseding chromosomal sex and gender norms.

Lastly, it remains unclear whether the signatures in both face-arrow drawings play with ideas of authorship and selfhood by introducing an intermedial interaction between word and image. Lorca becomes present in the drawing through the inclusion of his

name, but is Lorca the man or Lorca the artist who inhabits the work? Are the faces meant to be self-portraits or are they clowns or even *duendes*? What is clearer is that an increasing level of abstraction and the detailed focus on bodily fragments allow Lorca's late drawings to elevate the wound (and its focus on the life/death interrelation and the transgression of normativity) to a prominent examining position for the viewer's pleasure, shock and interrogation. These bodily fragments and wounds are further transformed into a visual spectacle in an unprecedented way through the cinematic medium as Lorca tried his hand at film writing in New York.

### 3. *Viaje a la luna*: Transgressive (Anti-)Narrative and the Spectacle of Death

El escenarista, el constructor literario  
de films debe ser ante todo un poeta  
que piensa en imágenes visuales.  
(Torre 1925: 387)

Jumping backwards in time, as is usual in Lorca's late works, to the crucial journey to New York the poet made in the late 1920s, this chapter will analyse Lorca's film script *Viaje a la luna* in terms of a transgressive spectacle of death, exploring ideas of the human body and identity immersed in a process of metamorphosis. My approach to Lorca's film script will be threefold: first, I will focus on Lorca's initial steps in his journey into the film medium, analysing the influence cinema had on him as a spectator and on his work before his trip to America. I will then consider the film script's structure and its spatiotemporal transgressions in parallel with Lorca's depiction of bodies as fragmented and mutable entities. I will also examine this issue in relation to ideas of artificiality and spectacularity, phenomena which are subverted and questioned by Lorca through his particular approach to cinema. Finally, I will focus on the Lorquian interrelation of desire and death, which presents a further transformative vision of these two forces as intertwined and dependent on each other.

Taking Lorca's theory of *duende* as a starting point, I argue that *Viaje a la luna* explores the idea of the body as a metamorphic entity and its unstable relationship with temporality and death, giving it specifically cinematic abilities for transformation. The film script's tableau structure represents, through dissolves and superimpositions, a series of juxtaposed depictions of fragmented and mutating bodies on the brink of corporeal destruction which invoke death as a simultaneously creative and destructive force. The bodily wound is presented in Lorca's film poetics not as a symbol of the fear of castration (in the psychoanalytic sense) or of the ultimate end of life and meaning, but as a site of

artistic creativity producing infinite images of desire mutating cyclically into further images of desire. The limits of bodies are blurry and permeable in the film script, thus suggesting that bodies should not be considered absolute entities but are rather determined by their constant interaction with their surroundings (time, space and other bodies) and by their inevitable subjection to death as a force that creates them in the artistic discourse and simultaneously threatens to destroy them.

The images in *Viaje a la luna* also propose an unstable interrelationship between erotic desire and death. Sexual desire is ambiguously intertwined with fear, repulsion and violence; as well as with humour and parody. The fragmentary and cyclical structure of the film script, in which images relate to one another by metaphoric, metonymic or simply contiguous associations, confounds the potential resolution of both processes, thus omitting from the spectacle the consummation of desire as well as the complete destruction announced by death's imminence. The nature of both these elements is elusive, permutable and disorienting in *Viaje a la luna*, which becomes a cinematic-poetic reassessment of the Lorquian Eros and Thanatos from an avant-garde standpoint.

### **The Trip to Cinema: 'Cineclub' and *El paseo de Buster Keaton***

Like many of his fellow students at the Residencia de Estudiantes in Madrid, Lorca's introduction to cinema took place through the pioneering 'Cineclub Español' at the magazine *La Gaceta Literaria* (Sánchez Vidal 1988: 142). Founded by Ernesto Giménez Caballero in 1928, the Spanish cinema club hosted the projection of several European and North American films (such as Sergei Eisenstein's *The Battleship Potemkin* (1925), Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927) and the silent comedies of Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin) and held many lectures and discussion sessions with students, scholars and artists attending. As Puyal lists more explicitly:



en lo que respecta a las experiencias de García Lorca como espectador cinematográfico, éstas irían de las vanguardias del cine francés (impresionismo, cine puro) a los filmes americanos de Hollywood en su género burlesco, pasando por el documental o el cine soviético. En suma, todo el gran periodo de cine mudo. (2011: 768)

This variety of filmic experiences helped Lorca acquire, as many of his contemporaries did, an affinity for the new medium and for some of the genres gaining recognition around the world at the time. Silent comedy and especially Buster Keaton's films seem to have fascinated Lorca's generation, due to their mixture of subversion, melancholy and slapstick comedy, which in one way or another started permeating the group's work.<sup>66</sup>

Lorca's proper incursion into the cinematic medium took place in the United States in 1929-30. His new friendship with Mexican graphic artist Emilio Amero resulted in Lorca's scriptwriting venture, an idea which he might have been considering when he wrote his short theatrical piece *El paseo de Buster Keaton* (1928), published in *Gallo* magazine. In this short play, a theatrical dialogue is interspersed with cinematic elements, such as references to well-known film director and actor Buster Keaton and to the silent comedy tradition of the time as well as to motifs and techniques Lorca had come to know in these films. Absurd and disconcerting scenes combine at times with a humorous tone and at others with lyrical images announcing the oneiric and apocalyptic urban poems of *Poeta en Nueva York*, as well as the images of *Viaje a la luna*. A strange relationship is established between Keaton's desire and images of suffering and death, which ultimately unveils his inherent anguish and sorrow. His stroll, the overarching premise of the short

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<sup>66</sup> See Uta Felten. 2005. 'El cine como generador de la escritura vanguardista en Federico García Lorca', in *Vanguardia española e intermedialidad*, ed. by Mechthild Albert (Madrid/ Frankfurt: Iberoamericana/ Vervuert), pp. 479-488. Also, for a more comprehensive approach to the influence of cinema on the 'Generación del 27' and other Spanish writers of this period, see C.B. Morris. 1980. *This Loving Darkness. The Cinema and Spanish Writers 1920-1936* (Oxford/ New York: Oxford University Press).

play, is presented as a series of encounters with different characters, whose interactions with Keaton are ambiguous and uncertain at best but which become ominous and disturbing when analysed closely.

The play, set in Philadelphia, also contains many references to modernity and American society, such as technological innovations like the *Singer* sewing machine and the gramophone, the marginality of black people (one of the characters is a black man who is eating his own hat) and popular fashion of the time (shoes made of crocodile skin, Keaton's pork pie hat, shirt and tie); all of which help to evoke the settings and tropes seen in Keaton's cinema and the place where it originated. *El paseo de Buster Keaton* can be considered a proto-montage, juxtaposing unrelated or random scenes in a rapid succession without narrative causality or resolution, also mirroring some other filmic representational devices such as magic tricks, close-ups and cutaways. Morris argues that cinema was the source which enabled Lorca to incorporate these tricks and devices into his play: 'films expanded the range of Lorca's imagination, which was enabled to visualize movements that, however rapid or strange, were inspired or authenticated by what he had observed on the screen' (1980: 125). In the play, Keaton falls off his bike and it magically flies chasing after two butterflies, a trick which supposes a transgression of the laws of physics and which might have proved challenging in a theatre play but would fit perfectly into a film by Georges Méliès or Keaton himself. Lorca's descriptions include the main character smiling and looking '*en gros plan* [sic]' (in close-up) at a young American girl '*con los ojos de celuloide*', who wears crocodile-skin shoes. All these elements used by Lorca resolutely refer to the filmic medium, as do the stage directions relating to the *mise-en-scène* of the play which surpass the actual dialogues in it in length and quantity. Similarly, the character of Keaton combines the absurdity that some of the plots in silent comedies used to have with a melancholy and sympathetic

acting style. The absurd is exploited to exacerbate the unconnected and unexpected actions and dialogue of the play's characters, whose emotions and identities change from lighthearted to melancholic at random.

The protagonist enters the scene accompanied by his four children, all of whom he stabs to death immediately afterwards, crying '¡Pobres hijitos míos!' (OC II: 277). He then makes a lighthearted comment on the fair weather, after coldly and nonchalantly counting the corpses on the ground out loud: 'KEATON: Uno, dos, tres y cuatro' (OC II: 277), and he resumes his walk. This attitude contradicts his previous murderous act, presenting a character whose emotions are unstable and unexpected, mutating from cheerfulness and nonchalance into rage and angst.

In his stroll, Keaton encounters different characters to which he reacts in his usual distant, emotionless, deadpan attitude, remaining impassive towards all of them. After killing his own children, shrugging at the questions asked by the American girl and being called a fool, he invariably seems to be unaffected or unconcerned. The use of generic archetypal names for the characters in the play ('Una Americana', 'Un Negro', 'Una Joven') is a recurrent trope from early popular and art cinema and one that Lorca uses in many of his plays (*La doncella, el marinero y el estudiante*, *El público* and *Así que pasen cinco años* are all examples) and also in *Viaje a la luna*. This profusion of nameless characters accentuates the farcical element of the play and the incongruity and absurdity of the characters, whilst it also serves here to veil the identity of everyone in the story as opposed to Keaton's character, who ironically does not reveal much about himself or his thoughts either: 'KEATON: No quiero decir nada. ¿Qué voy a decir?' (OC II: 278). This was a trope also used often by poet, playwright and cineaste Jean Cocteau. In his film *Le Sang d'un Poète* (1932), most characters present these archetypal titles ('the Poet', 'the Author', 'the Statue'), which not only veil their actions and behaviour in mystery and

incongruity, but also add a further disorienting and oneiric factor to the film narrative, proposing a multiplicity of meanings that can be ascribed to the images: ‘its exegeses were innumerable’ (Cocteau 2009: 4). Lorca’s play presents a narrative in which a plurality of significations emerge from the incongruity between the characters and the actions displayed. The obscure identities depicted contain an element of permeability, making it difficult to identify and interpret the motives and emotional reactions of the characters. Buster Keaton’s deadpan attitude and dark humour in the play, inherited from the actual Keaton films, is one of the aspects that will stand out in *Viaje a la luna*’s unsettling scenes.

Only in his final encounter with the Young Girl in *El paseo* does Keaton show some sign of emotion when she faints and falls off her bike, which contrasts with his distant treatment of her at first. He screams her name and denies being responsible for her fall, which is suggested as causing her death. He finally kisses her just as the stage directions move the focus of the action to the Philadelphia horizon and a shining star which is revealed as the police approaching. This last parenthesis simulates a cutaway or a zoom out of a hypothetical camera, abruptly changing the setting of the scene to a panoramic view of the city and thus leaving the play open-ended and frustrating the attempt at a conclusion to Keaton’s story. This suggests that even though the play has some sort of narrative continuity that resembles a plot, incongruity and lack of causality dominate the text. These features serve to shock and astound the reader, superimposing the cruel and the innocent, laughter and fear, and never reaching a narrative denouement. Keaton’s character fluctuates between deep emotion and nonsensical actions, disintegrating the story into a series of disconnected vignettes punctuated by the protagonist’s stroll.

In addition, the effects of the absurd serve to create a disconcerting atmosphere in which the motives and identities of the characters do not follow logical patterns, but instead seem nonsensical and arbitrary. The melancholy apparent in Keaton is only implied in the stage directions, alluding to his incongruous sighs and shrugs, his eyes closing unresponsively or his cries of desperation or anguish ('KEATON: ¡Ay amor, amor!' *OC II*: 278). His absurd actions and emotions are made even more absurd by his obscure and vague dialogues: 'KEATON: Quisiera ser un cisne. Pero no puedo aunque quisiera. Porque ¿dónde dejaría mi sombrero? ¿dónde mi cuello de pajaritas y mi corbata de moaré? ¡Qué desgracia!' (*OC II*: 280). Whilst all these elements might seem random, they nonetheless suggest that Keaton is fluctuating between his anguish and dissatisfaction and the desire for something or someone he does not or cannot have. Whilst the causes and consequences of his feelings are not specified, their force is felt in the powerful theatricality of his performance, which radically changes from comical to melancholic to almost melodramatic. His disheartened cry of anguish is explained by his desire to be a swan, which he cannot be because he would have to get rid of his actual self. This self is nonetheless identified as his characteristic cinematic persona (i.e. his typical attire), rather than his own physical or psychological features. His ontological dissatisfaction seems to be at odds with his otherwise lighthearted deadpan humour, his nonchalant silly remarks and his melodramatic tone of romantic longing. This amalgam of contradictory feelings eliminates the possibility of any logical explanation of the character's motives and development in the play, rather emphasising his theatricality and his subjection to the powerful force of desire.

The relationships between Keaton and the other characters seem random and irrelevant, so that actions involving death and desire become somewhat blurred and contradictory. The disturbing murder of Keaton's children does not provoke any feelings

of pain or regret in the protagonist (and perpetrator of the murder), and his encounter with the Young Girl later presents a metamorphosis of emotional states. What seemed a chance encounter at first (she asks him what his name is when they first meet) turns into Keaton's desire for the Young Girl, whom he calls by her name (Eleonora) and for whom he seems to have deep feelings. However, her reaction to Keaton seems to involve fear or anxiety. Learning his name proves too overwhelming to bear, so she passes out in dismay, trembling in some sort of agonising fit. Her fall makes Keaton scream in desperation, and his final kiss unites his feelings of love with her apparent death; but their connection is made confusing and their uncertain desire for each other (or lack thereof) does not reach a resolution either, since their encounter is interrupted abruptly mid-scene.

In this short play preceding Lorca's trip to New York, the poet makes use of a cinematic character like Keaton to portray his absurd and comical but melancholic style in a piece that hinges on laughable as well as disturbing and melodramatic situations juxtaposed as vignettes. The influence of the film medium thus becomes palpable in Lorca's work, which foreshadows *Viaje a la luna*'s incongruity and juxtaposition of grotesque and humorous images, its use of montage, dissolves, superimpositions, and its tableau structure.

### ***Viaje a la luna: Manuscripts, Embryo Status, and Un chien andalou***

The manuscript of *Viaje a la luna* can itself be traced along a complicated journey of its own. Written between December 1929 and January 1930, it was translated into English by Berenice G. Duncan and first published in the New York journal *New Directions in Prose and Poetry* (no. 18, 1964) by Richard Diers (Monegal 1994: 9).<sup>67</sup> The original Spanish

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<sup>67</sup> Although the current edition of *Viaje a la luna* by Antonio Monegal cites *New Directions* as the first journal where Duncan's English translation of the manuscript appeared, Diers himself published an earlier article on the film script in the magazine *Windmill* (issue 5, 1963) (Diers 1998: 183).

manuscript was not known until much later, when it was found at the home of Emilio Amero's widow in 1989 and from which the current edition by Antonio Monegal was finally published in 1994. The main difference between the original and the English translation is the number of segments contained in the film script, varying from seventy-eight in the translation to seventy-two in the Spanish manuscript. This is due to duplications of segments in the translated version which in the original Spanish version stand as single segments,<sup>68</sup> but otherwise the content of both manuscripts is the same, albeit the wording and phrasing vary slightly from one to the other due to translation. The film itself was finally produced almost seventy years after its composition, by the Spanish artist Frederic Amat in commemoration of Lorca's birth centenary in 1998.

The *viaje* in the title may be associated with Lorca's own trips: his actual trip to the city of New York and the metaphorical but palpable stylistic trip his work took at this time. He spoke of the latter in a letter to Jorge Guillén in 1928, in which he complained that his poetics had been taken for granted following the success of his *Romancero Gitano* and that his poetry was about to soar in a sharply different direction (Aguilar 2006: 210). The *Modernista* and Symbolist elements that had been a notable part of his poetry were reconfigured in the late 1920s by a search for stylistic renovation, evident in his *Prose Poems*, *Poeta en Nueva York*, *El público* and *Así que pasen cinco años*. In all of these, the influence of avant-garde movements and the negotiation with Surrealist and Expressionist elements can be identified.<sup>69</sup>

*Viaje a la luna*'s script presents a fragmented and discontinuous structure which deliberately transgresses narrative linearity and resembles a collage of vignettes or

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<sup>68</sup> This happens in segments seven, twenty-nine, thirty-one, thirty-six, forty-six, fifty-nine and sixty-one of the translated version.

<sup>69</sup> See C.B Morris. 1972. *Surrealism and Spain 1920-1936* (London: Cambridge University Press); and Derek Harris. 1998. *Metal Butterflies and Poisonous Lights: The Language of Surrealism in Lorca, Alberti, Cernuda and Aleixandre* (Fife: La Sirena).

tableaux. It is formed of a series of seventy-two units separated graphically in the text by blank spaces. These units can be identified as segments equivalent to film shots or shot sequences, varying in length and complexity. Lorca calls them ‘cuadros’ (frames or tableaux) and they contain his description of the *mise-en-scène* (‘Vista de Broadway de noche’), including the characters or objects in the shot (‘Sale un hombre con una bata blanca’), visual details of the shot (‘un plano blanco sobre el cual se arrojan gotas de tinta’) or transitional devices sequencing the segments (‘se disuelve sobre una doble exposición de serpientes de mar’). These technical indications referring to transitions between shots appear in more than two thirds of the script, and sometimes they become integrated with the content of the shot or sequence (the scene directions in shot twenty-one refer both to the previous sequence and to the theme of the shot). Through these complex segments, Lorca achieves great depth in the visual and poetic content of each shot, creating and articulating the intended filmic result but also establishing poetic connections between the images represented through language and the film medium itself, the linguistic aspects and the visual aspects incorporated in such an artefact.

Gubern argues that *Viaje a la luna* must be considered

un guión literario, aunque con algunas someras indicaciones técnicas, lo que nos obliga a recordar que un guión no es un film, sino un texto instrumental o transitorio, una matriz literaria preliminar para un proyecto de film, es decir, una larva o embrión textual para su ulterior desarrollo audiovisual, en un sistema semiótico muy distinto. (1999: 451)

This emphasises the intermedial relationship established between language and image in the film script, although Gubern somewhat downplays the importance of Lorca’s use of editing elements. It might be plausible to consider the film script as an instrumental tool or a transitory stage between literature and film, a cinematic embryo, but the specificities



of the filmic medium that will inform this analysis of the film script suggest that Lorca was very much aware of the technical and thematic advantages offered by cinema. What Gubern calls perfunctory technical indications constitute a significant part of *Viaje a la luna* if analysed closely, contributing a great deal to the overall artistic project intended by the poet. The film script can thus be examined taking into account its linguistic component, which presents the characters, images and scenarios and their poetic interrelationship but also establishes the visual and cinematic effects intended for its filmic production. In addition, *Viaje*'s cinematic qualities can also be analysed in themselves, in so far as Lorca's technical directions suggest (to an extent) the potential spectatorial position proposed were the film to be realised. A further perspective can also be adopted if Amat's film adaptation is taken into account, bearing in mind that the latter is just one possible interpretation of Lorca's script and that, albeit quite faithful to the text's structure and content, it inevitably makes use of modern technological resources that would have not been available to Lorca at the time of writing it. Nonetheless, Amat's film contributes to create a clearer sense of what Lorca's intended artistic project would have been if he had lived to see it fully realised in a film format.

The particularly problematic status of the film script as an intermedial artefact is in itself worth commenting on further. Lorca is, on the one hand, making use of elements that would usually be associated to two distinct media: poetry and film. Its linguistic component (the film script is preeminently a written text) and its vignette or tableau structure hinge on poetry's stylistic economy and sense of visibility. Poems can usually rely on rhetorical devices<sup>70</sup> to produce a visual effect through the use of language, often through means such as synthesis and economy of language. This immediacy of the poetic image brings poetry close to cinema's visibility, which Lorca exploits in the film script by

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<sup>70</sup> For an insightful analysis of poetic techniques in relation to cinema, see Whittock 1990.

combining it with cinematic devices such as dissolves, superimpositions and image juxtapositions and associations. The text of the film script thus achieves a sense of ‘watchability’, since the cohesive relationship between the poetic images and the potential cinematic images makes their separation almost non-existent, forcing the reader/viewer to draw from word and image simultaneously in order to make sense of the script.

The intermedial elements work closely together in the particular structure and (non)narrative created in *Viaje a la luna* to accentuate its visuality and cinematic qualities whilst retaining its poetic and textual qualities at the same time. On the other hand, the ambiguity ascribed to the textual and visual elements forming the film script also allows Lorca to challenge the distinctiveness of the media themselves and to exploit their similarities and differences to the film script’s advantage, since the very process of artistic representation and the notion of univocal and stable significations are being challenged within *Viaje*. I shall argue that the film script’s structure favours ambiguous image associations and rejects clear and linear narratives, questioning the possibility of meaning and ‘truthfulness’. The multiplicity of significations and media present in *Viaje* thus reinforces its ‘in-betweenness’ and embryonic status, which makes a multi-layered analysis of this remarkable work all the more enlightening.

Because of the film script’s lack of a linear narrative development, it is also problematic to establish a division into clear sub-sections. However, for the sake of clarity it could be divided into three parts, following the more or less recurrent characters and scenarios at different points in the script. The first part would run from segment one to segment thirty, in which a sign with the title *Viaje a la luna* appears; the second part would follow until segment forty-three, in which the recurrent character of the Man of Veins appears for the first time; finally, the third part focuses on this character in different

scenarios until it ends with a shot of the moon above a group of trees being waved by the wind.

There is a profusion of transitioning techniques which tend to fuse or dissolve images into one another, as well as showing double or multiple images simultaneously by superimposition. *Viaje a la luna* relies heavily upon montage—as opposed to continuity editing—to create the effects of rapid movement and incongruous juxtapositions, while emphasising the interrelations among the images that form it. Montage was introduced by Soviet filmmakers like Sergei Eisenstein and Lev Kuleshov and was characteristic of avant-garde filmmaking of the 1920s and 1930s, which to a large extent wished to experiment with new modes of representation and to create films which focused on purely cinematic elements (motion, visual composition, camera moves and editing) rejecting conventions like story, characters and narrative continuity (O’Pray 2003). Films such as René Clair’s *Entr’acte* (1924) and *Un chien andalou* (1928-29) by Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí are very close to Lorca’s film script in their unexpected associations of unrelated images and the shocking effects and plurality of meanings they achieved when assembled together through montage.

The commonalities between *Viaje a la luna* and *Un chien andalou* go beyond the (by this point somewhat deteriorated) friendship between Lorca, Buñuel and Dalí. Lorca had not seen *Un chien andalou*, but had probably read the script and had a clear idea of the nature of his friends’ project (Amat 1998a). Both films make use of montage, dissolves and superimpositions, and many symbols and image associations are used in both films. Interestingly, *Un chien* adheres more closely to classical modes of editing and narration (Smith 2014) although its spatial and temporal transgressions are still notable, whilst *Viaje* presents a more sustained preference for narrative discontinuity and spatiotemporal disruptions throughout. Both films do, however, propose an elimination or

disruption of linear narration, presenting instead a series of episodic vignettes which favour metaphoric, metonymic or other associative interrelations of images like analogy, simile or mere contiguity. *Viaje*'s rapid transitions and constant rhythmically successive images outnumber those of *Un chien*, which shows Lorca's intention to radically challenge classical modes of narrative representation through the film medium.

As regards the recurrent images in *Viaje a la luna* that evoke *Un chien andalou*, the eye, the moon and ants are the most obvious ones. The eye is reminiscent of the Surrealist movement and especially of the iconic scene from *Un chien* in which a razor slits a woman's eye which is mirrored through cross-cutting by the moon being split in half by a cloud. Remy refers to the representation of eyes, very often blinded, damaged or closed, as a 'fundamental principle of Surrealism, i.e. the freeing of the eye from any kind of authority. [...] The fragmentation of the bodies, the multiplication of the eyes, the splintering of our gaze, all this bars the spectator from reaching any totality' (1996: 159-160). Although the eye in segment thirteen of *Viaje* is not cut in two, it is followed by a scene a few segments later in which the moon itself is cut. Similarly, during the fight between the Harlequin/Man of Veins and the Young Girl in the lift towards the end of the script (an erotic/violent fight which is also reminiscent of *Un chien*), he tries to blind her by pushing her eyeballs in with his thumbs. Lorca's inclusion of eyes in the script might indeed have been intended as a reminder that totality and absoluteness are being challenged by this cinematic text, hence the rapid transformation of images and their incongruity with one another, which blurs vision and impedes total perception.

Ants in the film script also strikingly resemble *Un chien andalou*. In one of the male protagonist's scenes with the main female character, there is a close-up of his hand showing how swarming ants are emerging from the centre of his palm, an image which recurs throughout the film. In *Viaje*, black ants are paired with black numbers in stark

contrast with the whiteness of the bed from which they emerge. Their appearance provokes an effect of anxiety in both instances, since they randomly appear invading and covering an unexpected space (a man's hand in *Un chien* and a white bed in *Viaje*), as a agent of disruption, shock and disorientation.

*Viaje a la luna*'s preference for incongruity and shock rather than narrative continuity resonates with the early cinema of the 1900s and especially the prominent filmmaker and magician Georges Méliès and the lesser-known but also pioneering Spanish cineaste Segundo de Chomón.<sup>71</sup> Reminiscent of the eponymous *Voyage dans la lune* by Méliès (1902), Lorca's film script bears many resemblances to Méliès's and de Chomón's trick techniques and illusions in its recourse to multiple dissolves between scenes and superimpositions. De Chomón did a remake of *Voyage dans la lune* entitled *Excursion dans la lune* (1908), which imitates Méliès's film quite faithfully but introduces some new techniques such as a more advanced use of colour. The two filmmakers are well-known for being pioneers of cinema and films like *Voyage dans la lune* or *Excursion dans la lune* are examples of the wish to explore exotic, legendary and fantastical worlds through cinema and to present them to audiences as a form of cathartic evasion (Powell 2012: 41). The French cineaste usually experimented with comic grotesque images and fantastical or demonic characters, of which Mephistopheles, Beelzebub or Satan and magicians or sorcerers are some examples (Robinson 1993: 33), while the Spaniard was very interested in exploring animal transformations, double expositions and dissolves and presenting inanimate objects springing to life and moving independently through the development of stop motion techniques. Both Méliès and de Chomón used cinematic tricks often involving dismembered bodies and metamorphoses,

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<sup>71</sup> Segundo de Chomón (1871-1929) worked in Spain, France and Italy and was best-known for his associations with Pathé Frères and Itala Films. He is believed to be the first filmmaker to use the travelling dolly shot as well as developing the Pathé stencil process of film colouring and techniques of stop motion. For a thorough study of his work, see Sánchez Vidal 1992 and 1999.

transpositions and mysteries: ‘in an instant, objects turn into people, butterflies metamorphose into chorus beauties, men become women, anyone may vanish in a puff of smoke’ (Robinson 1993: 55), elements which are integral to Lorca’s *Viaje a la luna*.<sup>72</sup>

Furthermore, the aim of early cineastes to shock and amaze, what has been termed the ‘cinema of attractions’ model,<sup>73</sup> is closer to an avant-garde film script like *Viaje a la luna* than Hollywood’s storytelling could be. Continuity editing is rarely used in *Viaje*, and Lorca’s use of montage and superimposition points to a preference for a tableau narrative highly reliant on image associations rather than linear narration. The shock and disorientation produced by spatiotemporal transgressions and random image juxtapositions contribute to create an effect of amazement, attraction and even repulsion at times. In his work *Body Shots: Early Cinema’s Incarnations*, Jonathan Auerbach presents Tom Gunning and André Gaudreault’s ‘attractions’ theory as emphasising ‘visual shock and display rather than spectatorial identification and narrative integration’ (2007: 86), a way to attract the viewer to the images displayed in front of them. The obscure or random connections between images in *Viaje a la luna* respond to a poetic rather than causal logic, which serves to highlight the display of the images themselves and their aesthetic effects without any strict narrative constraints. Lorca’s film script is indebted to this initial era of cinema and its great innovations within the medium, while also establishing a dialogue with the avant-garde in its typically Surrealist oneiric atmosphere and its use of montage and superimposition.

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<sup>72</sup> Interestingly, Segundo de Chomón’s short films *La Grenouille* (1908) and *Métamorphoses* (1912), amongst others, contain elements that appear profusely in Lorca’s film script, such as a comical/repulsive frog or rapid transformations of animals and objects. Despite the many correlations between *Viaje a la luna* and de Chomón’s films, there is no proof that Lorca knew the early cineaste’s work.

<sup>73</sup> Tom Gunning studies the ‘cinema of attractions’ thoroughly in Gunning 1993 and 2006.

## **Spatiotemporal Transgression and the Metamorphic Body: the Tableau**

### **Narrative and the Spectacle of Death**

Lorca's film script creates a fragmented narrative characterised by disorienting jumps across space and time, which mirrors its representation of bodies in a constant state of metamorphosis, fragmented and disintegrating but simultaneously becoming other bodies. I argue that this spatiotemporal transgression points to the difficulty of transcending space and time through cinematic representation, thus questioning their fixity and stability within the film. Cinematic space and time are seen as fragmented, resistant to cinema's attempt to represent them wholly and faithfully. What film represents will only be a partial, fragmentary process of spatiotemporal states and interactions with the human body. In turn, the body is subjected to space and time as the forces that control its creation, its destruction, its capacity to perceive and interact with the world. Lorca's cinematic representation of bodies focuses on their inevitable spatiotemporal contingency and their never-ending mutability. The body is incapable of transcending space and time, but film's efforts to manipulate them offer the possibility to represent such an attempt, portraying the tension between corporeality and spatiotemporal (in)stability. As film theorist Jean Epstein suggested, cinema has an animistic power on the objects and beings it represents, infusing life in them through motion, granting 'to the most frozen appearances of things and beings the greatest gift in the face of death: life' (2012: 295). Lorca goes beyond that and bestows both destructive and creative powers on the film medium, since the assemblage of fragments (spatiotemporal discontinuities, juxtaposed tableaux and bodily parts) through montage serves a dual role associated with death and life: simultaneously threatening the reliability of cinematic representation as a faithful depiction of reality while also creating an alternate cinematic reality, a spectacle enlivened by the multiplicity of spaces, times and bodies which form it.

With the emergence of cinema at the turn of the twentieth century, the representation, rationalisation and standardisation of time became prominent issues in the Western world. In her important work *The Emergence of Cinematic Time*, Mary Ann Doane explores the obsession with capturing time, especially in relation to ‘immortality’ and ‘the denial of the radical finitude of the human body’ (2002: 2) as a general preoccupation at the turn of the twentieth century, prompted by the changes in society stemming from industrialisation and the new organisation of the world of labour. A clear distinction between spatiotemporal presence and absence seemed to be challenged by the new medium, since distant places and past events (even non-existent ones) could be made present in the ‘here and now’ of the cinema screen. As Freeman posits, ‘the photographic media negotiate the relationship between past and present: a photographic image consists of the trace of an object and presents that object in a moment other than the moment of recording’ (2010: xviii). Film also blurred the limits between reality and illusion, transgressing what were believed to be fixed and immutable realities such as human bodies or life and death. Inanimate objects could spring to life, heads could be detached from their bodies and sorcerers could conjure the dead back from the underworld. Also, time could be stopped, accelerated or decelerated by the magic of cinema. As opposed to the spectators watching a film, whose bodies will inevitably age and die, the filmic artefact is itself immortal: it can be played a myriad times over and will always remain the same even after time has gone by and those bodies who appear in it are departed.

Time was a concern that permeated Lorca’s work in the late 1920s. In Lorca’s theory of *duende*, the performance of art entails an embodied and ephemeral act in the ‘here and now’. The immediacy of any performance is in conflict with temporality understood as a fixed and stable continuum, since it hinges both on the desire for representation and meaning (processes which essentially attempt to transcend and totalise



time) and on the ephemeral, which is random and short-lived. This conflictive process acquires in Lorca's poetics a connection with anxiety, shock and fragmentation; and in the film script in particular, a relationship with the acceleration and discontinuity of time, mutation and transformation, incongruity and a lack of causality or narrative linearity.

The visual and kinaesthetic capabilities offered by cinema are exploited in *Viaje a la luna* as a way to grapple with the idea of representing reality and the anxieties caused by the extreme difficulty of such a task. Time and space are parts of reality that seem impossible to represent wholly and faithfully through art, since they transcend any one artistic depiction and therefore render those representations incomplete and limited.

Manipulating time in film seems to be a way of dominating and rationalising it to represent reality faithfully (due to cinema's illusion of movement and temporal development), but the presence of the random and the contingent still threatens that rationalisation.

The first part of the film script, which may be considered a prologue preceding the actual title appearing in segment thirty, is mainly characterised by short segments in which isolated scenes focalise on different elements in close-up, most of them human bodily fragments. An exception to this is segment seven, in which there is a long shot of Broadway at night. This scene follows a view of a long corridor which ends in a window, and after the wide shot of the city has been shown, it dissolves back into the view of the corridor. This corridor appears again in segment twelve, serving as a spatial signpost amongst the rest of the close-ups. The spatial setting of the first part of the script thus superimposes a domestic enclosed space on an urban space, that of the metropolis *par excellence*, New York City. In addition, this spatial tension is accompanied by the enormous speed in which the shots succeed each other, which is in keeping with the allusions to modernity and technology implied by the urban scenarios. As Doane posits,

‘the acceleration of events specific to city life was inseparable from the effects of new technologies and a machine culture made possible by developments in modern science’ (2002: 4). The cinema is very much the machine that drives these spatiotemporal transgressions, as evidenced in Lorca’s references to the moving camera as ‘la máquina’ in segments six and twelve. Whilst the urban space accentuates the idea of movement and speed suggested by the successive corporeal transformations and the shocking appearance of the machine, the domestic spaces in the script serve to disorient and confuse, since the images keep changing scenarios so that the oneiric and grotesque atmosphere being created by the dismembered bodies is strengthened. The camera is the force enabling the images to move frenetically and to mutate and fuse into other images, at once threatening to disintegrate and annihilate them but also with the ability to recreate them.

The first segment of *Viaje* represents a white bed against a grey wall, where sets of numbers 13 and 22 start dancing around the bed magically, invading it until they are like small ants. This ‘avalanche of numbers’ may be suggestive of ‘scientific knowledge, money and the importance given to statistics, norms and rules in modernity’ (Hacking 1987: 52-53). The numbers on the bed can be associated with modernity’s obsession with statistics and the representability and measurability of abstract concepts like time. However, as Doane states, ‘[...] modernity is also strongly associated with epistemologies that valorize the contingent, the ephemeral, chance — that which is beyond or resistant to meaning’ (2002: 10). Lorca seems to be challenging the possibility of complete and absolute measurability due to the necessary presence of the contingent, that which is ephemeral and therefore, resists totality and absoluteness. As he emphatically claimed, *duende* ‘rechaza toda la dulce geometría aprendida’ (OC III: 310), Geometry taken as a metonymical term for mathematical or logical thought. *Viaje a la luna* evidences this rejection as inevitably causing shock and anxiety, because it shows

the tension created when the ephemeral (the ants and the random bodily fragments) destabilises and threatens the urge to capture and measure reality in a totalising, rational way. The random appearance of the ephemeral and its incongruity thwart the possibility of ascribing a rational logic to the images in the script. Powell suggests that this kind of narrative ‘allows for multiple and personalised readings in contrast to the privileging of a single reading as practised by the traditional Hollywood narrative’ (2012: 64). The multiplicity of connections that refer images to contiguous images or associate them to one another by repetition or analogy favours poetic meanings that have broken free from any imposed rational constraints. In the film adaptation of *Viaje*, Amat emphasises this tension and anxiety by superimposing the ants on the numbers, both in the foreground and in close-up and in the background covering the white bed, accentuating this superimposition by scratches on the film itself, which give a sense of degradation and fragmentation. The camera tilts and zooms in to reposition the bed from a long shot to a medium shot and from an eye-level angle to a high angle, which increases the sense of anxiety produced by the ants invading the bed and the whole frame simultaneously [Fig 18].

Spatiotemporal disruption is used profusely in the first part of *Viaje*, so in segment two an invisible hand tears the sheets off the bed violently, acting as a sequencing force that moves the action forward but blurs the previous space and time coordinates. The focus on close-ups of bodily fragments rapidly appearing and disappearing impedes a logical temporal or spatial continuity with the previous shots, instead proposing an association of the random images by contiguity. In segment four, a close-up of a human head with a frightened expression dissolves into a head made of wire on a watery background. The vision of fear depicted on the human face is dehumanised by its transformation into a metallic head, a fusion of man and machine. Interestingly, the

spatiotemporal transgressions made possible by film's technology, which threaten to dissolve totality and continuity, are also an element Lorca uses to represent fusions between technology itself and the body, creating an unexpected hybrid, a bionic human of sorts. This fusion will be repeated at the beginning of the second part of the script, in which two women have hands whose fingers are morphing into metal wires.

The totality of the body is thus disrupted by the incongruous succession of body parts and their deconstruction and transformation, suggesting again the attempt at capturing and representing their wholeness and fixity through cinema and the impossibility of doing so, which results in a hybrid and metamorphic corporeality. Auerbach suggests that 'editing threatens the body, threatens to dismember it' (2007: 98). The close-ups of bodily fragments represent a composite body in the process of being created: a fragmented hand, followed by big feet running fast in segment three, a frightened head that dissolves into a head made of wire in segment four, an image of female genitalia in segment five, a group of six dangling legs in segment eight and these dissolving into a group of trembling hands in segment nine. These images focus on boundaries separating the fragments from a corporeal whole, announcing the fragmentary and threatening nature of film editing and its cutting and dismembering of reality. Whatever is left out of the screen seems to be destroyed or eliminated by the camera, but *Viaje's* swift movement between tableaux also emphasises the alternative cinematic body simultaneously being created. These bodily fragments represent mutilated or unfinished bodies, which together with the rapid dissolution of segments into one another give a sense of fluidity but also highlight the creative power given to the metamorphic fragments. Put together, they form a distorted body, changing and becoming something else, dismembered but recreated. The stringing together of the severed fragments

reorganises them into a new being, this time a heterogeneous body whose allure and spectularity lie in its very resistance to be captured and totalised.

The film script often focuses on these corporeal limits in the depiction of bodily orifices or issue: characters vomiting (severed heads, people in the bar, a little black child in the lift), characters bleeding (a woman who falls down a staircase, the Man of Veins), or even cannibalistic violence. This imagery resonates with the tradition of the grotesque in modern art, working in similar ways as in Lorca's drawings by signalling Bakhtin's life-death and body-world confluences. In Bakhtinian terms, 'all of these acts are performed on the confines of the body and the outer world, or on the confines of the old and new body. In all these events the beginning and end of life are closely linked and interwoven' (Bakhtin 1984: 317). Lorca's representation exposes interactions with the outer world via human corporeality, and turns the limits between them into a spectacle which the camera will make visible. Destruction and creation are interrelated and permeable, such that the body must be taken apart, placed on the edge of corporeality to then be recreated again: 'el duende hiere, y en la curación de esta herida, que no se cierra nunca, está lo insólito, lo inventado de la obra de un hombre' (*OC* III: 314). *Viaje a la luna's* tableau narrative displays this spectacle in its succession of juxtaposed shots dissolving into one another or superimposed, whose emphasis on the process of transition and becoming rather than on denouement keeps the action unresolved and open-ended, keeps the wound open. The film script acquires a sense of narrative development which resembles a spiral rather than a linear succession: its lack of coherence and resolution eliminates the possibility of certainty or causality, but the vignettes forming the spectacle become a narrative (albeit a non-linear one) in themselves.

Following the dismembered bodies in the first part of the script, a longer sequence in segments ten to twelve transforms the fragments into human characters that will

momentarily acquire (almost) fully visible bodies, although double superimposition mixes the characters in the tableau with each other. A crying child and a woman beating him violently are superimposed by the camera or 'máquina', which captures them in a fluid movement of fast sequences:

10

Las manos que tiemblan [se disuelven] sobre una doble exposición de un niño que llora.

11

Y el niño que llora sobre una doble exposición de una mujer que le da una paliza.

12

Esta paliza se disuelve sobre el pasillo largo otra vez, que la máquina recorre con rapidez. (1994: 61)

This brutal and explicit act of violence is nonetheless so quick that it barely allows for its implications to be fully grasped before it has vanished into the preceding images (the corridor) and the following segments, thus incorporating the image into the general chaotic atmosphere. The two interrelated bodies (the child and the woman) appear momentarily into the collage of bodily fragments to add a further transgression of time and corporeal totality. Just as the dismembered and vomiting bodies in *Viaje* suggest the dissolution of boundaries between bodies and the outer world, so does this image refer to an elimination of the boundaries between the child's innocence and the woman's violence; between both their bodies which are in brutal contact; and between cause and effect and temporal linearity (the child is crying first and then the woman hits him, the two images becoming blurred and simultaneous by superimposition). The event is finally left unresolved, as if it were the fragment of a dream, and the camera resumes its race along the corridor. Because the outcome of the sequence is not made explicit in the script

(nor in the film adaptation), its connection with previous or later images is also uncertain, it is only suggested by their contiguity and their presence in the spectacle.

The violence of the sequence with the child and the harlequin motif are reenacted at the end of the first part of the script by reprising images briefly shown in previous segments, although their reference to each other is made uncertain by spatiotemporal confusion. A man in a white lab coat and a child in a swimming costume (again with black and white rhomboids) inhabit a violent scene in which the man attacks the boy after he refuses to wear a harlequin costume, grabbing him by the neck and gagging him with the costume as he tries to scream. Aquatic animals are interspersed in the sequence, first fish and then snakes and crabs. Fish and water have a special symbolism in Lorca's work relating to sexuality, fertility and life-giving associations (Feal Delibe 1973: 110). These watery symbols are nonetheless juxtaposed with images relating to death and the metamorphic grotesque: the violence of the man, the fragmented elements in the scene mutating rapidly and the image of a fish dying and then multiplying into more and more fish in agony in an exaggerated kaleidoscopic close-up:

28

Pez vivo sostenido en la mano en un gran plano hasta que muera y avance la boquita abierta hasta cubrir el objetivo.

29

Dentro de la boquita aparece un gran plano en el cual saltan, en agonía, dos peces. Estos se convierten en un caleidoscopio en el que cien peces saltan o laten en agonía. (1994: 65-66)

Amat accentuates this kaleidoscope effect by zooming out the camera from the close-up of the two first fish gradually until the large group of fish is visible, using an alternating

colour scheme which simulates the agonic beats or jumps suggested in the script [Fig. 19].

The image of an animal being killed is a recurrent one in the film script. Fish, frogs and a bird are meant to be ‘killed in front of the camera objective’, a motif that underlines the frailty of the object being attacked and that might be a parallel symbol to the children being physically harmed by adults in the script. In light of *duende*, these acts of violence respond to the Lorquian vision of death as a source of creative substance: ‘España es el único país donde la muerte es el espectáculo nacional, [...] y su arte está siempre regido por un duende agudo que le ha dado su diferencia y su calidad de invención’ (*OC* III: 317). The aesthetics of death in Lorca relates to the inevitable immanence of death in human imagination (therefore, images of death will be universally understood) and also to the poetic force that death’s interrelation with human life brings about. Any symbol of life processes and energies acquires a more powerful dramatism when confronted with death, life’s counterpart, and in Lorca’s poetics that coalescence of radical opposites is sought as a factor of transgression. Their appeal lies precisely in their departure from the norm, their signs of inventiveness as poetic images and the extremity and unexpectedness of their coalescence with one another. They offer unprecedented associations of meaning, drawing on aspects of reality that, beautiful or gruesome, are familiar in their evocation of destruction and creation. In *Viaje*, the representation of images showing what is repulsive, disgusting or violent serves the function of transgressing the canons of idealised beauty and thus causing an extreme reaction in the spectator, something often characteristic of the avant-garde as well as of the ‘cinema of attractions’ at the turn of the twentieth century. None of the scenes of violence in the film script seems to be condemned or resolved or to have a narrative denouement, but instead they are merely presented as tableaux in a spectacle within the kaleidoscope of images



that form the script, a web of spiralling recurrences that blur the multiplicity of connections that can be made amongst them. Their poetic value lies precisely in their liberation from logical explanation, their creation of meanings not reduced to a single interpretation, but open to a multiplicity of exegeses that keep changing and metamorphosing infinitely.

Whilst most of the shots in the first part of the script are juxtaposed by jump cuts, the majority of transitions contain an element of superimposition or dissolve, creating composite and metamorphic images and accentuating the rhythmic movement intended by Lorca. He alludes to the rhythm of transitions on various occasions (segments twenty-one and thirty-six), in reference to the spatiotemporal movement meant to take place in the shot. The first instance refers back to the previous shots, explicitly stating that they should transition into one another rhythmically. Although this comment could be taken to include all shots before this one (which would be plausible since jump-cuts abound in this first section), it seems to refer specifically to the immediately previous sequence of shots (segments seventeen to twenty-one) in which the dissolves are explicitly contained within the shot description, linking them closely to one another:

17

De los gusanos de seda sale una gran cabeza muerta y de la cabeza muerta un cielo con luna.

18

La luna se corta y aparece un dibujo de una cabeza que vomita y abre y cierra los ojos y se disuelve sobre

19

dos niños que avanzan cantando con los ojos cerrados.

20

Cabezas de los niños que cantan llenas de manchas de tinta.

Un plano blanco sobre el cual se arrojan gotas de tinta.

(Todos estos cuadros rápidos y bien ritmados.) Aquí un letrero que diga *No es por aquí*. (1994: 63-64)

The sequence would then connect the moon split in half by a cloud with a vomiting head, followed by the singing children and the ink drops falling on their heads and then on a white background. The incongruity of this disparity of elements is nonetheless connected by their rhythmic interrelationship, and significantly by the evocation of an image by the previous one through analogy. The head in segment seventeen evokes the circular shape of the moon it transforms into, which in turn transforms into another head. This second head (vomiting this time) is opening and closing its eyes, which relates to the next shot in which the children have their eyes closed. Subsequently, the ink drops (whose liquid nature is reminiscent of the earlier vomiting), fall both on the heads of the children and then on a white background, probably a self-referential allusion to the act of writing itself. Finally, this writing takes shape in the next shot, in which a linguistic sign reads: 'No es por aquí'. The mixture of language and image which seems to connect this sign with the previous sequence of shots is paradoxically a warning to not make that connection of meanings (the sign is literally saying that this is not the right way to read this film script) and also against the spatial movement followed up to this point, since the next shot reveals a door into a different space and therefore a change of direction and scenario.

*Viaje a la luna* problematises the capacity of artistic expression (in this case cinematic representation) to represent ever-changing realities like space, time and the human body. On the one hand, the stability of meaning is threatened by the transgression of linearity and narrative continuity, offering a tableau narrative instead in which glimpses of meaning emerge from the juxtaposed and interwoven images in the script. On

the other hand, the fragmentation of space, time and bodies in *Viaje* creates a disorienting atmosphere underlined by the repulsive and ominous images represented. The metamorphic body together with unfiltered depictions of brutal violence and acts causing disgust and repulsion are aligned with the script's ostensible denial of wholeness and totality, since spatiotemporal coordinates, corporeality and death's imminence are not given a logical resolution or a sense of completion. Instead, Lorca focuses on the process of becoming something else (or of becoming nothing by dying), giving his spectacle a sense of never-ending liminality, a constant delay in the imminent destruction or impossibility of meaning. Furthermore, *Viaje a la luna*'s metamorphoses serve to explore the instability of human identities and the difficulty of representing them through art. If human bodies and emotions are in a constant state of change and permeability, artistic representation is bound to be an unreliable source in their faithful portrayal.

### **The Harlequin and the Man of Veins: Artifice, Humour and Horror**

Metamorphic bodies, harlequin costumes, deceitful identities or a man without skin all point to the destabilisation of boundaries between bodies, objects and subjects, suggesting not only uncertainty and instability but also purposeful transformations and reversals due to a multiplicity of processes taking place within the same body. Bodies are presented not as immutable entities, but as 'processes which extend into and are immersed in worlds' (Blackman 2012: 1). Blackman's vision of embodiment takes into account the constant 'entanglements' taking place between human bodies and the world surrounding them, which make it difficult to draw boundaries between the human and non-human, self and other, material and immaterial. The human subject is, she posits, 'not self-contained, individualised, clearly bounded and separate from others, but rather the borders and boundaries between self and other [are] considered porous and permeable' (Blackman

2012: xiv). The instabilities to which *Viaje*'s bodies are subjected signal an attempt to do away with these boundaries through cinematic representation, fusing the fragments derived from these entanglements together in a collage of sorts. The seamless illusion of cinema makes this possible, but it inevitably renders the result artificial and unreliable, in the sense that its theatricality is exposed and its presumed faithful and absolute representation of reality is denied. Through the permeability and malleability of bodies in *Viaje*, Lorca presents a self-conscious spectacle in which the cinematic 'illusion of reality and of non-mediation' (Pethö 2011: 97) is sought whilst simultaneously its very artificial and illusory qualities are unraveled and exposed.

The rapid transitions and mutations in *Viaje*, Gómez Torres argues, 'revelan un mundo de incertidumbre donde todo es inestable, un universo sometido a las metamorfosis y a los disfraces, donde las cosas y las personas no son lo que parecen' (1999: 52). *Viaje a la luna* raises the question of truth versus artificiality by challenging notions of life and death as stable and immutable. The self-moving bodies on the screen 'blur categorical distinctions between the animate and the inanimate, and [...] question our very being' (Väliaho 2010: 26), confronting the spectator with polymorphous bodies, half-dead characters, unexpected acts of violence and identity transformations. Both the corporeal limits and emotional states of characters are unstable and change at random. For instance, segments three, four and five depict images of fear, but their rapid succession and fluidity from one to the next distort the limits that separate them, also adding the disconcerting element of the absurd and the humour of the carnivalesque:

3

Pies grandes corren rápidamente con exagerados calcetines de rombos blancos y negros.

4

Cabeza asustada que mira fija un punto y se disuelve sobre una cabeza de alambre con fondo de agua.

5

Letras que digan *Socorro Socorro Socorro* con doble exposición sobre un sexo de mujer con movimiento de arriba abajo.

6

Pasillo largo recorrido por la máquina con ventana de final. (1994: 59-60)

The cause of fear in this shot sequence is hidden away from the text and the camera, barely suggested in the amalgam of elements that transition into one another: feet running away from something, a human head looking at something frightening or the repetition of the word 'help' superimposed on female genitalia as the camera tilts up and down. Their disparity and incongruity create a sense of absurdity, self-consciously evidencing the process of filmic juxtaposition. Further, a glimpse of a harlequin costume is introduced through the black and white rhomboid socks that the running feet are wearing, which will reappear in later scenes and which relates to the ambiguity between the humorous and the horrific so characteristic of *Viaje*. The archetypal figure of the harlequin, which appears profusely in the Lorquian drawings and in *Así que pasen cinco años*, alludes not only to theatricality and the dramatic medium in general, but also to deceit, trickery and the ludic, thus introducing the humorous and the artificial into the overarching tragic and fearsome atmosphere in the script. The juxtaposition of humour and horror re-inscribes their distinct generic meanings into a tragicomic fusion. The reference to the carnivalesque emphasises the role of disguise and masquerade belonging to the *commedia dell'arte* tradition, an important motif that permeates *Viaje a la luna* and that Lorca seems to be concerned with in his New York years. Characters who are not what they seem, who wear masks, who transform into other things and who belong to a spectacle being watched, are

all recurrent in the filmic text, as well as in the aforementioned *Así que pasen...* and the also contemporaneous play *El público*.

The tableau narrative in the sequence delays the resolution of the conflict presented in the images (i.e. an impending threat that causes fear), instead metamorphosing each momentary vignette into the next. The artificiality and theatricality of the harlequin are fused with those of the artificial head of wires substituting the human head through a dissolve. In turn, the linguistic screams for help superimposed on a woman's vagina transition through a cut into a long corridor along which the camera moves, relating the 'tunnel' shape of the corridor to the female sexual organ and introducing a self-referential allusion to the act of filming. Since the images in the sequence are denied a clear resolution, their meaning is fused and blurred, and in doing so, Lorca brings the element of artificiality to the fore by pointing to the incongruity and disparity of meanings juxtaposed. The horror and the humour present in the shots therefore lose their sharply opposed meanings, revealing instead a tragicomic hybridity that reinforces the exposed artificiality of the spectacle.

Similarly, the second part of the script contains recurrent meta-textual comments on the writing process and has the most elements showing the artifice of the text. In tune with the spatial multiplicity of previous shots, segment thirty is explicitly set in a previously unseen room, although the lack of further details makes it difficult to establish any correlations with previous or following sequences. The segments in this part are very descriptive nonetheless, emphasising the movements of the characters, the objects in the scenes and the camera:

Habitación. Dos mujeres vestidas de negro lloran sentadas con las cabezas echadas en una mesa donde hay una lámpara. Dirigen las manos al cielo. Planos de los bustos y las manos. Tienen las cabelleras echadas sobre las caras y las manos contrahechas con espirales de alambre.

31

Siguen las mujeres bajando los brazos y subiéndolos al cielo.

32

Una rana cae sobre la mesa. (1994: 66-67)

The agony of the crying women dressed all in black, whose hybrid and metamorphic bodies combine the vulnerability of their suffering with the sharp and resistant quality of their metal fingers (an oneiric vision of bionic humans), is suddenly contrasted by the absurd and incongruous (even comical) appearance of a frog. The monstrous and the metamorphic are juxtaposed with the enigmatic ritual, perhaps a prayer, that the women are entranced by, also suggesting melancholy and suffering. The rapid succession of scenes is interrupted before reaching a resolution to this conflict, instead initiating a further series of transformations and fast movements of the camera through multiple opening and shutting doors and up and down a staircase. The repulsive close-up of the frog is dissolved into a bunch of orchids and then into a female head vomiting compulsively, whilst the light and contrast of the image changes from positive to negative and vice versa, signalling once again the multiplicity of elements being brought together and their incongruous confluence in the film. Finally, one of the women falls down the staircase and there is a close-up of her face and then her nose bleeding profusely. These incongruous images are connected to one another by chaotic movements, spatial confusion and the usual fluidity amongst segments. Like a chain of images mirroring one another, this sequence produces a shocking but vacuous effect, underlined by the grotesque bodies and bodily fluids being spilled and especially by the speed at which they

are presented. The effect of the absurd in this sequence serves to ironise the sombre, even tragic, atmosphere introduced in the two women's scenario, adding the repulsive dying animals and bodily issue to accentuate their illogical juxtaposition. The images briefly displayed are in sharp contrast with the technical and descriptive elements in the text producing a sense of distance and revealing their artifice and incongruity, simultaneously trying to link the images together but warning the reader that this would be absurd and illogical because it is all a spectacular illusion after all. Even though a narrative development is resisted and denied, the excessive speed which this sequence reaches culminates with the climactic introduction of the Man of Veins.

The most prominent character in *Viaje a la luna*, the Hombre de las venas, is revealed by a swift tilt of the camera upstairs in shot forty-three, briefly foreshadowed by the previous sequence in which a woman 'enlutada' falls down a staircase and her head is superimposed on a drawing of veins and grains of salt in relief. The Man of Veins is a metamorphic body, a naked man whose internal muscular and circulatory structures are exposed as an outside layer denoting an ambivalent process of decomposition and recreation:

43

[...] En lo alto aparece un desnudo de muchacho. Tiene la cabeza como los muñecos anatómicos con los músculos y las venas y los tendones. Luego sobre el desnudo lleva dibujado el sistema de la circulación de la sangre y arrastra un traje de arlequín. (1994: 69)

The Man of Veins syncretises both human corporeality and its inevitable mortality and decay. He is alive and epitomises the functioning of human bodies in the blood system but he is also an image of decomposition and putrefaction, devoid of skin and half-dead. His ambiguity represents the confluence of life and death in the metamorphic, in the



process of becoming. He represents an unfinished body, which exposes the Bakhtinian acts that signal the boundaries between bodily confines and the outer world and of the thin line between life and death.

The Man of Veins is also a sign of the tension between excess and omission of meaning in *Viaje a la luna*. His body is, on the one hand, a composite of the previous images that have been metamorphosing throughout the film script, an excessive amalgam of a multiplicity of bodies. On the other hand, his corporeal characteristics also underline his non-totality, his incomplete state in a mutating process. He has taken off his harlequin costume (which he is now dragging along with him) and has also done away with the external layers of his body. His carrying the harlequin costume alludes to the theatricality and artifice of the carnivalesque, suggesting that by ridding himself of his costume (and his skin), he is somehow showing a 'true' self as opposed to the falsity of masks or theatrical personae. This idea is also explored by Lorca in his play *El público* (1929-30), in which a similar character appears and where there is a discussion about truth against appearance in art, specifically in theatre. The character *Desnudo Rojo*, a figure being crucified, tortured and physically maimed, bears many resemblances with the Man of Veins in that their bodies are in a process of decomposition and their wounds and internal parts are being exposed. They are both naked and red, and their blood is visible and announces their imminent death. The *Desnudo Rojo* alludes to the figure of Christ being crucified and tortured, with wounds all over his body and a crown of thorns on his head. In the context of the play, this character supposedly embodies a kind of theatre which wears no masks and is devoid of artifice and falsity (Amat 1998), the 'theatre beneath the sand'. He is doomed, nonetheless, since this kind of earnestness is bound to bring suffering and pain. However, the incongruity and mixture of tragic and humorous

elements in the scene in which he appears suggest that these clear-cut principles are being challenged and shown as ambiguous:

DESNUDO. Yo deseo morir. ¿Cuántos vasos de sangre me habéis sacado?

ENFERMERO. Cincuenta. Ahora te daré la hiel, y luego, a las ocho, vendré con el bisturí para ahondarte la herida del costado.

DESNUDO. Es la que tiene más vitaminas.

ENFERMERO. Sí.

DESNUDO. ¿Dejaron salir a la gente bajo la arena?

ENFERMERO. Al contrario. Los soldados y los ingenieros están cerrando todas las salidas.

DESNUDO. ¿Cuánto falta para Jerusalén?

ENFERMERO. Tres estaciones, si queda bastante carbón.

DESNUDO. Padre mío, aparta de mí este cáliz de amargura.

ENFERMERO. Cállate. Ya es éste el tercer termómetro que rompes. (*OC II: 648*)

The tragic martyrdom that the character supposedly performs is opposed to the comments he and the nurse character make, at times humorous or absurd and at times devoid of any signs of humanity, compassion or fear. The bleeding and wounding of the man is coldly and accurately calculated in glasses of blood, in appointment times and in the number of thermometers used. The Naked Red Man himself 'desires to die' and concurs with the nurse that the wound on his side (the one that, in the Christian tradition, was caused by a lance and was the last of Christ's wounds) is the one with the most vitamins, meaning it is the healthiest or most wholesome one. This subversive scene blurs the lines between tragedy and comedy and brings all the elements down to the spectacle, suggesting that the seemingly 'true' theatre cannot be devoid of theatrical elements and therefore of artifice. The Naked Red Man speaks like a character, makes jokes and even his martyrdom and

death are ironised and mocked, so underneath ‘the sand’ and the mask, there is nothing but a further mask or artifice.

This character informs to some extent the elements associated with the Man of Veins in *Viaje a la luna*. The latter’s grotesque body exposing his insides points to the suffering and pain of being skinned alive (echoing the biblical wounds the Naked Red Man had), but it also suggests the elimination of any external layer or ‘mask’ and therefore his appearance as his ‘true’ self. The harlequin costume he is dragging along emphasises this transformation, which conveys the fusion of the grotesque and the carnivalesque and their particular symbolism in modern art.<sup>74</sup> However, the Man of Veins’s seemingly ‘true’ image becomes a sign of death (he even adopts the position of the cross in segment forty-seven evoking the crucifixion and martyrdom of Christ) and a sight too unbearable to contemplate, which implies that, like the ‘theatre beneath the sand’ in *El público*, an absolute truth without artifice is impossible. This realisation is made even more evident in the final images of the film script, introducing a final twist that turns everything on its head. When the Man of Veins is seen lying dead on the street, the camera cuts to a bed where a pair of hands is covering a different juxtaposed corpse. A young man in a lab coat and rubber gloves and a young woman in black approach the bed, drawing a moustache on the ‘terrible corpse’s head’ and kissing each other while they laugh out loud. Their kiss is relocated to a cemetery by a dissolve and this scene then cuts to a ‘cinematic’ kiss with another couple. The Man of Veins’s death is re-appropriated in the next vignette to depict an ironic view of mortality, re-inscribing the

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<sup>74</sup> Whilst Bakhtin’s ideas underlined the creative dimension of the grotesque image and the interrelationship between life and death, he also emphasised the importance of the ludic and the humorous in the carnivalesque tradition: reversal, parody, song and laughter were integral parts of the spectacle of carnival. In his work on Rabelais, he touches upon the carnivalesque grotesque: ‘This carnivalesque type is a bodied one in every respect [...] exposing all those parts and processes by which the body takes in or spews out the world alien to it, all those parts and processes that are suppressed by social codes of behaviour’ (Connelly 2003: 8).

meaning of death into a comical and absurd parody. The first couple's laughs and mockery of mortality (using a reference to Dalí's infamous moustache?) divest death of its tragic meaning and infuse it with theatricality and irony. However, their own act is itself further ironised by another, this time explicitly artificial, kissing couple also mocked. Thus, both the couple's desire and the Man of Veins's death lose their original significations by being spectacularised and made artificial through cinema, in order to be shown as unstable and heterogeneous. Lorca's self-conscious questioning of art's 'truthfulness' is nonetheless embracing theatricality and the spectacle as liberating qualities that ultimately manifest and positivise identity's instability and multifacetedness.

The ambiguity of the Man of Veins is present all throughout the second half of the film script. He is a monstrous and ominous character, whose interactions with other characters produce fear, repulsion and death. He kills a frog by gripping and squeezing its neck until it dies in front of the camera, he violently attacks a young woman in a lift and then kisses her passionately after she turns into a statue, and people around him vomit convulsively. However, he is an image of suffering and is crying for help amongst the sleepy and emotionless faces of the people in the bar scene, and he finally suffers a mysterious death that leaves him lying on the street on a bed of newspapers and fish. His humanity and non-humanity are thus fused, revealing a polymorphous and heterogeneous identity. He epitomises metamorphosis in that his role in the film, like his body, is in a constant state of becoming: from harlequin to decomposing man, from villain to victim, from life to death, from human to non-human and vice versa. The most frightening of his traits, though, may be his exposure of the very idea of human mortality and the horror it causes, the 'constant awareness of death's proximity' (Nandorfy 2001: 267). Nonetheless, death is not presented as the ultimate end of life and meaning, but as a crucial part of

both. It is re-inscribed and positivised as a site of spectacularity and transgressive creativity, exposing the artificiality and illusion cinema attempts to create. By opening up the boundaries between truth and artificiality, humour and horror and desire and death Lorca is suggesting that death has an ambivalent role as destructor and creator of aesthetic value. The fusion of life and death is a ‘dramatic enactment of irreconcilability and the celebration of *thanatos* and *eros*’ (Nandorfy 2001: 267), a complicated interrelationship which has acquired a prominent place in Lorca scholarship, and which becomes dramatised in *Viaje a la luna* through a new artistic medium.

### **The Circular Moon Gaze: Eros and Thanatos on the Cinema Screen**

The themes of sexual desire and death are traditional tropes in Western culture and art and their interrelationship in artistic representation is integral to the understanding of Lorca’s *oeuvre*. Erotic desire has an ambivalent role in Lorca’s poetics that connects it with the mysterious, the ominous and human mortality; but its signification is nonetheless often positivised as a source of artistic creativity, life energy and aesthetic value. Death’s universality and inevitability make it the only possible counterpart to the immense power of erotic desire on human beings, so the coalescence of Eros and Thanatos in *Viaje a la luna* draws on their epistemological ubiquity in human imagination and on their radical aesthetic effects.

The explicit inclusion of naked bodies, close-ups of male and female genitalia together with Lorca’s complex vision of desire in the film script inevitably resonate with cinema’s unique depiction of human sexuality as a spectacle. As Laura Mulvey wrote in her seminal 1975 essay ‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema’, the cinema offers the spectator the pleasure inherent in looking at something, known as scopophilia. She cites Freud’s *Three Essays on Sexuality* to explain scopophilia ‘as one of the component

instincts of sexuality which exist as drives quite independently of the erotogenic zones' (Mulvey 1975: 806). This voyeuristic spectatorial look has for Mulvey two different aspects from which pleasure arises: one derives from 'pleasure in using another person as an object of sexual stimulation through sight' (1975: 808) and the other from the identification with the human forms seen on the screen. To the scopophilic pleasure of looking at the cinematic image, Lorca adds the pleasure (or discomfort and even repulsion in some cases) of looking at images of a sexual nature, such as explicit images of genitalia, full-frontal nudity or couples embracing or kissing passionately. It would seem then that the cinema offers a level of freedom to the scriptwriter which is not afforded, say, a playwright or a poet. Neither Lorca's drawings nor his poems and plays offer quite so explicit and graphic a depiction of sexual organs and naked bodies up to this point in his career. However, during and after his trip to New York, this explicitness becomes more frequent in his drawings and plays.<sup>75</sup> It could therefore be argued that the cinematic medium and its treatment of sex played a part in Lorca's more risqué approach to sexuality and desire in his later years.

Both the explicitness of sexual images and nudity and their ambiguous juxtaposition with horror and death serve to transgress their meaning into an unstable spiral of pleasure and repulsion. The close-ups of genitalia and full-frontal nudity belong to the sphere of the taboo, bordering on pornography. Despite the relatively lax treatment of sex in mainstream cinema in the first decades of the twentieth century, explicit sexual images and nudity were considered taboo. Sex was only alluded to or suggested in films, due to a sense of morality or decency enforced by laws regulating cinematic

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<sup>75</sup> An example of this is *El público*, in which characters explicitly refer to the anus and defecation and sex acts like anal intercourse. Also, Lorca's drawing 'Venus (Agua sexual)' (1934) [Fig. 7] is a full frontal depiction of a naked woman from whose vagina a multitude of miniature hands emerge.

productions.<sup>76</sup> The images in *Viaje a la luna* would have been extremely controversial for audiences in the 1930s. However, their presence is not intended, at least directly, for sexual viewing pleasure, since they are momentary and often inscribed in sequences with an amalgam of incongruous images. Their signification resonates more with their radical opposition to the contiguous images of desire and death and with their shocking and transgressive value in the film script [Fig 20]. It is nonetheless obvious that nudity and sexually explicit images do evoke sexual desire, and their participation in the depiction of the sexed body in *Viaje* has an important significance in terms of Lorca's conception of Eros and Thanatos. In this sense, the naked bodies and genitalia point to sexual pleasure, although this pleasure is inevitably connected with pain, suffering and horror in the script. Lorca's anti-narrative offers a cyclical depiction of sex and death in which the values of both are highly unstable and constantly transposed and interchanged, adopting radically varied positions in the spectrum of meaning.

It has been documented that kissing on screen produced an immense fascination in early cinema spectators, to the point that it was even elevated to a science by the Hollywood film industry. The Spanish 'Cineclub' paid tribute to it in an 'Antología del beso' during its twenty-first session in May of 1931. Morris argues that 'the interest shown by magazines in the way stars kissed on the screen was part of the mental and moral freedom induced and inspired by films' (1980: 10). However, this was seen, both by Spanish artists and critics in this milieu and by Lorca in *Viaje a la luna* as an object of

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<sup>76</sup> At the time *Viaje a la luna* was written, Hollywood films were already subjected to the Motion Picture Production Code, also known as the 'Hays Code', a set of industry moral guidelines which were applied to films produced in the United States. The rigorous enforcement of this censorship code did not begin until 1934, although the Hays Code was officially adopted in 1930. Films produced between 1929, when sound pictures were introduced, and 1934 are considered 'Pre-Code' films, and their explicitness and suggestiveness in terms of sex, nudity, violence and other taboo subjects was still considerably accepted. For a thorough study of censorship and regulation of Hollywood films, see Bernstein (ed.) 1999.

mockery and satire.<sup>77</sup> The ‘beso cursi de cine’ in the penultimate shot of the film script ironises the tendency of Hollywood films to use sex (or rather the less taboo romantic kiss suggesting sex) as such a cliché to represent sexual desire and as an evocation of the (hetero)normative socially accepted modes of conduct. The adjective ‘cursi’ suggests both the distasteful and the kitsch, hinging on the appropriateness and morality that this kind of representation purports to maintain in the context of film.<sup>78</sup> The passionate kiss between the Man of Veins (disguised as a Young Man) and the Young Woman is transgressed as a violent scene of brutality and rape, and later it is also ironised by the Man’s passionate impulses towards the Woman’s statue alter-ego, a scene reminiscent of the Greek myth of Pygmalion and which Cocteau used similarly in *Le Sang d’un Poète*.

This scene in *Viaje* resonates partially with Mulvey’s psychoanalytic reading of cinema narrative as perpetuating the phallocentric male gaze and reenacting the ‘castration anxiety’, with the subsequent objectification and punishment of the female or its fetishisation or substitution for a fetish object to disavow the fear of castration (1975: 811). The Man of Veins’s sexual drive towards the female character transforms into violence and brutality, a murderous instinct bordering on sadism and cannibalism. His desire to possess her, harm her and blind her is nonetheless, as is usual in *Viaje*, interrupted by metamorphosis and spatiotemporal incongruity. The scene is abruptly interrupted by a cut to a guitar, whose strings are swiftly cut by a hand with a pair of scissors. Immediately after this spatiotemporal breach, the scene builds up to a climactic moment of violence and is then succeeded by the moment of transformation. The Young Man takes off his costume revealing the Man of Veins and the Woman morphs into a

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<sup>77</sup> Morris cites Enrique Jardiel Poncela, a Spanish humorist, and several Spanish magazines of the 1920s and 30s as producing multiple satires of the kiss motif and other tropes introduced by cinema, especially Western films and other Hollywood productions.

<sup>78</sup> For an interesting look at the concept of ‘cursi’ in Spain’s twentieth century, see Noël Valis. 2002. *The Culture of Cursilería. Bad Taste, Kitsch, and Class in Modern Spain*. (Durham, N.C. & London: Duke University Press).



plaster bust of statue. The female character, thus substituted for a passive fetish object, 'loses the battle' against the male overpowering desire. However, for this domination to happen, both characters have had to go through a transformative process, ridding themselves of their humanity and entering a state of artificiality and deconstruction. They are not living bodies anymore, but spectacles that the film script makes possible: the Man of Veins is a decomposing corpse-like monster and the Young Woman is merely an inanimate image to be admired. The Man of Veins's desire for the statue, like that of Pygmalion, becomes ambiguous in its suggestion of the desiring subject's preference for the work of art (the artifice and the inanimate) over the actual living object it represents (the Young Woman), as well as his simultaneously libidinous and destructive impulses. The allusions to artistic creation in the images of the guitar and of the statue inscribe the characters and the scene in the realm of the artificial, self-referencing the poetic and spectacular qualities of the sequence. The Man of Veins's desire for the Woman/Statue never gets fulfilled, but neither does his intention to 'punish' and dominate her.

Lorca suggests that there is no truth or reality prior to his representation, since the seemingly never-ending process of transformation of the characters offers no real identity behind their multiple disguises throughout the course of the narrative. Also, their instincts or drives do not lead them anywhere near fulfilment, as both their desire and their mortality never get resolved or transcend the spectacle, thus failing to reveal any true essence or (sexual) identity. There is only the spectacle and its anti-narrative denial of corporeal and sexual stability. Finally, the constant use of self-referentiality is, in Mulvey's terms, a way to distance the spectator from narrative identification by shattering the illusion of cinema's mechanisms and challenging the underlying phallogentric and patriarchal system enforced by mainstream film. By transgressing the normative ideas often ascribed to sexual desire in film, Lorca presents a more nuanced vision of desire in

inextricable interrelation to death and the spectacle, a vision that additionally makes a commentary on the moralistic and politically correct treatment of sex in cinema.

Another transgression of cinematic ‘appropriateness’ which links sexual desire and death is an extreme opposite of the kiss or nudity in the spectrum of images depicted in film: images of bodily issue, vomit and bodies in disgust. In shots fifty to fifty-five, for instance, most of the scenes take place in a bar. The tuxedo-clad customers are constantly being served wine in their glasses by a barman, but they invariably cannot lift the glasses to drink their wine. The barman keeps topping up the full glasses with more wine which they cannot drink, rendering the situation absurd and incongruous. Later, they are all shown vomiting. This vision of desire resembles previous vignettes in that desire cannot be fulfilled (the men cannot quench their thirst) but the conflict never gets resolved either and the barman keeps serving wine. Similarly, their bodies are threatened by repulsion and disgust. In their vomiting, as Bakhtin posits, the confines of their bodies and the outer world are ‘linked and interwoven’ (1984: 317). The expulsion of part of the body (which had previously been appropriated by that body in the form of food or drink) transforms it into another body which is expelled violently, causing physical pain and repulsion. However, the reasons and consequences of this bodily pain are not explained or resolved, since the wine that the characters wanted to drink had not been ingested. Nicolás Martínez associates vomit in the script with ‘la repugnancia que la gente siente hacia la heterodoxia en los hábitos o, en este caso, al rechazo irrespetuoso ante cualquier tipo de novedad artística, bien sea la que él propone o la que plasmaron sus, hasta hace poco, amigos en *El perro andaluz*’ (2006: 268). It might then be argued that Lorca seeks the defence of heterodox desires and identities as well as of creative freedom, challenging and transgressing ideas presumed to be finite, discrete and absolute, such as life and death, fear and laughter, the beautiful and the repulsive or the boundaries between the

human body and the outer world. The fragility and permeability of bodies, states and emotions signals the constructed and metamorphic nature of desire and seeks to disrupt the normative system keen to stabilise and regulate it.

Lorca's representation of the body in *Viaje* hinges on sexual difference as well as on sexual desire in order to exacerbate the ubiquity of change and metamorphosis. In segment five (a shot in which the repeated word 'Socorro' is superimposed on a female sexual organ) and in the sequence where three men look at the moon (segments forty-five to forty-six), the sexed body becomes the focus of the potential camera. Both images of genitalia are juxtaposed with images of horror, one of them the linguistic expression of fear and danger (the word 'help') and the other the visual and auditory expression of fear or repulsion (a mouth screaming). Both shots represent the threatening of the human body and its placement on the brink of a situation producing pain or suffering (when somebody screams or cries for help there is usually an undesired situation or a potentially harmful force approaching). However, this impending pain is juxtaposed with a site of sexual pleasure, suggesting either that it is sexual desire which is causing the threat or that it is simply the opposite of it. In either case, none of the shots leads to the consequence of this threat. The denouement is suppressed from view and left unresolved, so there is no pleasure (no fulfilment of desire) but no pain or death either. Lorca presents the preliminary stages of desire and death but no resolution or climax in which one suppresses or dominates the other. This constant delay of representation and meaning, far from offering a clear and univocal message, opts instead for a liberating vision of artistic representation. Desire and death are presented as constructs, easily interchanged and transformed, but their causes or consequences are not certain. The universality of these two forces is exploited in their unexpected confrontation, a coalescence that is never taken to its final stage of completion but is left unresolved. The value of metamorphosis

here lies in the elimination of the boundaries between love and death, which adopt each other's opposing features and thus are embraced as twin forces in constant interrelation. The circular shape of the moon and its symbolic value associated with these two elements in Lorca's work is a significant pointer in the film script, since its presence is a reminder of the poetic and polysemic meaning that the tableaux can adopt through juxtaposition, evoking their metamorphic nature and, therefore, their instability and arbitrariness.

When adapting Lorca's script to the screen, Frederic Amat was convinced that *Viaje* depicts human beings as 'víctimas de nuestras pasiones, víctimas de nuestro deseo' (*Making of* 1998). Amat's film, although predominantly faithful to Lorca's script throughout, does lean towards a more sombre and fatalistic portrayal, overlooking some of the ambivalence and comical elements present in the text.<sup>79</sup> This suggests that *Viaje a la luna* presents a fatal vision of desire and passion, in keeping with Dennis's (2000) claim that erotic desire is never fulfilled but only leads to frustration and death. The tableau structure of the film script and its omission or interruption of narrative resolutions nevertheless suggest that the relationship between desire and death is more nuanced than that. If analysed closely, the characters in *Viaje a la luna* are indeed subjected to desire, yet death appears not as an interruption and destruction of life, but precisely as the necessary counterpart of that desire. Neither force ever reaches a resolution in the film or dominates the other; on the contrary, they run along hand in hand as twin discursive elements, binding the images in the successive tableaux together.

The cyclical and spiralling nature of *Viaje*'s tableaux works both by metaphorical associations as well as by juxtaposition and contiguity. The moon gaze sequence with three mysterious men makes use of cross-cutting to present different superimpositions of

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<sup>79</sup> The more tragic tone of the film, reinforced by the use of music, lighting effects and visual elements, and the correlations established by the use of the same actors to portray different characters give the adaptation a slightly more straightforward narrative than might have been intended in the film script. For a more thorough examination of Amat's film, see Smith (2014).

images on the moon itself. The first man's gaze is juxtaposed with a close-up of the moon; the second one looks up and the camera cuts to a close-up of a bird's head whose neck is then squeezed until it dies; finally, the third man is shown followed by another shot of the moon which dissolves into a close-up of male genitalia<sup>80</sup> which in turn dissolves into a screaming mouth. Each gaze is associated with a different image, all of which could be connected to one another metaphorically. By analogy, the circular shapes of all the images coincide (the moon, a bird's head, a penis's head, a mouth), but they can also be taken as symbols of death, sexual desire and horror respectively by metaphorical substitution. In addition, the contiguity of the men's gazes to the images superimposed on the moon relies on the famous 'Kuleshov effect'. Soviet filmmaker Lev Kuleshov, as well as other masters like Alfred Hitchcock later, theorised about the power that editing can have on film narrative and the meaning of images. Juxtaposing the same close-up shot of a person's face with different images can change the perception that spectators have of their interrelationship, suggesting radically different meanings of the character's gaze (although his/her expression remains the same). The three men look at the moon and the moon in return offers them varying meanings. Is each man projecting a different meaning onto his gaze at the moon or is the moon itself mutating? Whether the moon is changing or the men's visions are is somewhat irrelevant in the film script, since the sequence unsurprisingly does not reach a logical conclusion. The metamorphosis of the men's sights and the variability of the meanings evoked through the moon suggest that desire adopts many guises and is too fluid and unstable to pin down through logic or rationality.

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<sup>80</sup> The original Spanish manuscript does not specify the gender of the genitalia, but neutrally refers to 'un sexo' (1994: 70), whereas the translation of the English manuscript by J. F Aranda explicitly refers to 'un órgano sexual masculino' (Aranda 1980: 19). This is one of the few significant differences between both manuscripts, and implies a possible manipulation or alteration to either disguise or suggest a homoerotic gaze more explicitly. It remains unclear which version was Lorca's.

Lorca proposes a liberating use of filmic narrative, such that the images themselves have lost their stability and are always prone to transformations, so there is no univocal or absolute meaning to be extracted. In a film script like *Viaje a la luna* in which narrative continuity is rare, if not purposely transgressed, the Kuleshov effect seems magnified by the incongruity and randomness of the images juxtaposed, proposing a revision of the reliability of logic and meaning. Lorca declared after seeing Jean Cocteau's *Le Sang d'un Poète* in 1932 that films in which storytelling and narrative continuity are transgressed 'defy explanation; their greatness lies [...] in the freedom we all enjoy to interpret them as we will' (Morris 1980: 123). The desiring gazes of the three men offer a multiplicity of images that can defy explanation and interpretation. This is a vision of desire as a malleable and multifaceted process: at times evoking fear, danger or repulsion and at times pleasure, humour and parody. The radical opposition of the images and their multiple interpretative possibilities situate desire in confrontation with the Freudian life and death drives simultaneously. The 'circular gaze' of the Moon is indeed the vision that *Viaje a la luna* proposes: rather than offering a linear narrative in which events and characters develop in front of the spectator, Lorca presents the spectator with a plethora of meanings that can be transformed at will, challenging and questioning the very act of cinematic representation as a stable and truthful source of meaning.

The spine-chilling Man of Veins is a prime example of the cyclical interrelation of Eros and Thanatos. His state of (in)completeness and his metamorphic qualities are signs of his ambivalent identity. On the one hand, he has supposedly got rid of his mask, so he is showing his innermost self devoid of artifice. On the other, he is lacking the elements that would make his body complete and which signal that he is about to die, so he is in need of something he does not have in order to survive. His monstrous and repulsive appearance and his gruesome actions denote a sense of dissatisfaction, of desire for

something else he needs to re-appropriate. He desires the Young Woman passionately, but he also desires to harm her and kill her, to eat and possess her, as their interaction in the lift scene suggests. His mutating body and identity (he mutates into the harlequin and a young man intermittently) reveal a figure fluctuating between human passion and human mortality. These two poles are embraced by the character, whose body is sexual ('desnudo de muchacho'), alive and energetic ('el hombre de las venas gesticulate y haciendo señas desesperadas y movimientos que expresan vida y ritmo acelerado'), but also deadly and violent ('el hombre de las venas estruja la rana con los dedos'). He embodies Eros and Thanatos, but these two elements are fused within him and exposed as permeable throughout the spectacle of *Viaje a la luna*. The Man of Veins's unstable presence in the script resists a synthesis of these elements into a dominating one, instead exposing his body and identity as constructed and subjected to the twin drives simultaneously and cyclically.

Lorca's *Viaje a la luna* is thus presented as a circular process, constantly reinscribing and recreating that which it destroys. After death is approached but not resolved, its circular reenactment produces constant metamorphoses into further images, never breaking the circle of the spectacle. Faced with this threat to meaning and representation, the spectacle's unstable quality simultaneously refers to that which it reinterprets, always 'leaving the wound open' for a new transformation to take place. As a final example, in the sequence where the Man of Veins has succumbed to his death, the following shot presents two characters who literally laugh at death as they kiss sensually. This scene is then placed literally next to death itself in a cemetery, but the 'beso cursi de cine' makes fun of both love and death. Their opposition is nothing but a cyclical process, a circular gaze where there is no beginning or end, but an ongoing spiral that keeps mutating and recreating itself. Death is not presented as the ultimate end of

representation, but instead transposed into further images of desire and death, culminating with the aptly circular shape of the moon and its mystical undertones which, like the images in the script, represent a mystery unsolved. *Viaje a la luna* is not only transgressive in its representation of death and desire as intertwined in art, but also its unconventional structure and self-questioning of cinematic representation are in themselves transgressive qualities which make Lorca's first step into film a remarkable endeavour.



## 4. Visual-Verbal Representations and Intermediality in Lorca's Late

### Multimedia Works

El duende no se repite,  
como no se repiten las  
formas del mar en la borrasca.  
(OC III: 316)

### Thinking Through Intermediality

Approaching Lorca's late works from a comparative perspective, this chapter will analyse the queering effects of *duende* on the limits of artistic media. As the previous chapters have shown, Lorca's late poetic works, his late drawings and his film script *Viaje a la luna* all share a particular relationship with the performative. While they hinge on the visibility of performance as poetic artefacts, they are all embryos in their own way, 'stuck' in an intermediate state between the page or canvas and their actualisation through, say, a performed play, a recited poem or an edited film. These three media, however, figure the 'potentiality' of performance: through the visual freedom they enjoy, they become self-aware works in that they expose the intermedial elements they contain and their potential actualisation through other media while simultaneously adhering to a single channel of articulation. All arts are capable of *duende*, Lorca claims, so even the least performative media can perform the play of this impish spirit by transgressing the limits and norms governing creative practices and their differences.

Elements conventionally ascribed to distinct and multiple media can interact with one another in order to produce a broader and multi-layered meaning within a single medium. The limits among the arts are thereby crossed and exposed as arbitrary and constructed. One medium can borrow from another one and vice versa, sometimes invalidating a given work's adherence to that medium in the first place. Lorca is thus questioning the idea of compartmentalised meaning in art and the validity of medium

distinctions, since he creates artefacts that defy norms and limits categorising creative practices. His late works are in effect articulations of his poetics of the limit, constantly questioning and redefining the boundaries that art must destroy to create new forms never experienced before. The intermedial articulation of elements from his aesthetic theory of *duende* responds to Lorca's emphatic questioning of the reliability of artworks to produce stable and univocal meaning. His vision of art is fluid and his search for the unexpected and the queer requires representations that supersede norms limiting and compartmentalising artistic expression. Correlations among the three media in his later years show Lorca's interest in creating artefacts that defy perceptive norms, playing with boundaries and roaming between the verbal and the visual across literature, art and cinema.

In the broader debate surrounding word-image relations and verbal and visual representations, intermediality is currently one of the most prominent areas of wide scholarly discussion, encompassing disciplines such as literary theory and criticism, cultural studies, art history, communication, music or film studies. Pethö suggests that precisely the interdisciplinary basis of intermediality propelled it to wider critical attention and made it possible for scholars from a great number of fields to participate in the discourse around questions of intermediality (2011: 68). The basis of such an area of enquiry can be traced back to Ancient Greece and the study of rhetoric and art, with thinkers and poets such as Horace, Homer and Plato already trying to establish clearer notions regarding different creative artistic practices and their interrelationships. Concepts like *ekphrasis* —‘description’ in Greek, but more recently applied to verbal interpretations of visual artefacts— and Horace's dictum ‘Ut pictura poesis’, which proposed a vision of poetry and painting as ‘sister arts’ or almost equivalent forms of representation, inform to a large extent the ongoing discussion of different creative

practices, arts or media and the new approaches to word-image relations in literary and visual culture studies.

Roland Barthes made an important contribution to the study of visual culture and some of his texts are milestones on word and image relations. Barthes posits that images, in the same way as texts, can be 'read' and analysed attending to their multiple significations on different levels of meaning (denotation, connotation, the relationship between linguistic and visual signs), including the importance of cultural and historical *mentalités* embedded in any given artistic or commercial artefact (1977: 17-19). In the 1990s, scholarly studies of art and visual culture were rather detached from literary studies, despite the fact that word-image relations had been a prominent area of scholarly debate throughout the twentieth century. Peter Wagner (1996), drawing on ideas by Barthes, addressed this problematic issue and proposed a more inclusive and interdisciplinary approach to studies concerning visual and verbal representations and paved the way for intermediality to become a more common and prominent approach within literary and visual studies, also stressing the importance of applying current theoretical and critical approaches (feminism, poststructuralism, deconstruction) to the analyses of art and visual culture.

W. J. T. Mitchell addresses the complex topic of representation in its various forms or through various media, and especially the nuanced process of medial interrelations taking place within and across media. In *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (1986), he theorised more specifically about images (what they are, how they relate to ideas and concepts, and how they differ from words), and their particular interrelation with words and texts, whilst in *Picture Theory* (1994), his claim is more generally related to representation and its intrinsic mixture of media: 'all media are mixed media, and all representations are heterogeneous; there are no purely visual or verbal arts' (Mitchell

1994: 5). While word-image relations can lead to establishing distinctions and hierarchies amongst the arts and usually raise issues concerning different ways of representation, it is necessary to acknowledge and analyse critically the multimediality inherent in artistic creation and human perception. Media are not that easily disentangled from one another. Images should not be considered inferior to or different from words in terms of their ideological and cultural content and should therefore be analysed in their own right and alongside texts as products and creators of *mentalités* and cultural discourses, an idea which has paved the way for more interdisciplinary and intermedial approaches to literary and visual cultures in recent years. Wolf (2011) proposes a definition of ‘medium’ which hinges on the semiotic organisation of information (literature as a whole would be considered a medium as opposed to music, film, painting, etc.) and on institutional and technical ‘sub-media’ (such as theatre or the book), as well as attending to the cultural conventions that regulate its perception as a medium. In this broad sense, as used in literary and intermediality studies, a medium is:

a conventionally and culturally distinct means of communication, specified not only by particular technical or institutional channels (or one channel) but primarily by the use of one or more semiotic systems in the public transmission of contents that include, but are not restricted to, referential ‘messages’. (Wolf 2011: 2)

The concept of intermediality can refer to the medium’s intra-compositional aspects and/ or to the relationships established extra-compositionally, that is, across media. In light of this, we may speak of intermediality as ‘any transgression of boundaries between conventionally distinct media’ (Wolf 2011: 3), which would include relational processes taking place within or across media such as ‘gestation, similarity, combination, or reference including imitation’ (2011: 3).

Jens Schröter argues that in the context of intermediality, it can be recognised that ‘media do not exist disconnected from one another’ (2011: 2). Rather than offer a univocal and general definition, he proposes a series of discourses based on scholarly debates and models which refer to different approaches to issues of intermediality. Three models are of special relevance to the purposes of this thesis: ‘formal (or transmedial) intermediality’; ‘transformational intermediality’; and ‘ontological intermediality’. Formal intermediality or transmediality is a concept ‘based on formal structures not “specific” to one medium but found in different media’; ‘transformational intermediality’ is a model centred around the ‘representation of one medium through another medium’, which in turn leads to ‘ontological intermediality: a model suggesting that media always already exist in relation to other media’ (Schröter 2011: 2).

Monegal, editor of *Viaje a la luna*, sheds some light on the status of Lorca’s film script, an intermedial artefact in which different levels of signification (transmedial elements ascribed to poetry, art and cinema) are at work:

Las relaciones entre el signo y el objeto son de orden distinto en el lenguaje verbal y en el cinematográfico. En la palabra el signo esconde al objeto, en la imagen el objeto se nos revela como tal y es una operación secundaria la que lo convierte en signo. [...] La imagen no pasará de ser una representación fiel de lo particular hasta que algún recurso de la sintaxis cinematográfica, ya sea en la composición del plano o en el montaje, la cargue de significado, desvelando su valor metafórico secundario’. (1994: 17)

Monegal establishes a clear distinction between word and image in terms of their particular modes of representation and the levels of meaning that can be extracted from them. Arguably, images can be taken as faithful representations of reality while words automatically carry a double articulation of meaning in the Saussurean sense. Barthes

would agree that images are initially closer and unambiguous representations of objects (1977: 17), but it is important to acknowledge, as Monegal does, the ability of the medium (in this case cinema) to charge the image with signification, such that the image is no longer unambiguous but carries connotative values: metaphorical, cultural, ideological, etc. Herein lies the complexity of *Viaje a la luna*, insofar as the poetic and ideological significations extracted from its textual elements are combined with its cinematic components, which in turn add a further layer of meaning to the text.

In her study on cinema and intermediality, Pethö rejects the idea that intermediality in film is a mere extension of intertextuality in general, in that cinema cannot be seen as compatible with metaphors of the “text”. She adheres to the idea of intermediality as being ‘sensational’ rather than ‘conceptual’, ‘reflective’ rather than ‘reflexive’ (Pethö 2011: 68). She argues that reading intertextual relations engages our intellectual capacities, while reading intermedial relations ‘requires, more than anything else, an embodied spectator’ (Pethö 2011: 69). She thus establishes a distinction between sensual or sensory perception and intelligible perception, which implies a separation between ‘body’ and ‘mind/brain’ perceptions. This idea is debatable, especially in light of Blackman’s (2012) work on embodiment and her fundamental idea that human perception implies a system of brain-body-world entanglements, but Pethö does admit to the notion of an ‘interface’ in spectatorial perception of cinema. ““Sensing” the intermediality of film’, she argues, ‘is therefore grounded in the (inter)sensuality of cinema itself, in the experience of the viewer being aroused simultaneously on different levels of consciousness and perception’ (2011: 69). She further adds that the spectator ‘not only does not distinguish between the media constituting cinematic multimediality, the mediated nature of the experience itself (the mediality of the movies) also becomes almost unperceivable’ (2011: 57). These ideas can be extended to the perception of other

media (drawings or poems in Lorca's case), since the web of sensory meanings created in a poem (as it is read or heard) or in a drawing (as it is seen or analysed) stimulates the reader/spectator at different levels of perception too, especially when visual and verbal representations are intertwined in their composition. In the context of literary and visual culture studies, the interconnection and mix of media and transmedial elements is an extremely recurrent phenomenon and a process worth analysing, as it will impact and enrich the wider scholarly productions in the humanities.

Whether looking at media as always dependent on other media, as semiotic systems of communication containing transmedial elements, or in terms of each medium's particularities of representation, it seems fundamental to look closely at the often multiple levels of perception and sensory meanings being activated within and across creative practices. Issues of perception and embodiment deal more directly with the medium's process of representation and transmission of (multi)sensorial meanings: visual, verbal, auditory or a combination of some or all at once. Intermedial correlations among Lorca's late works show an avid interest in creating artefacts that defy and queer norms and limits, constantly playing with boundaries and roaming between word and image. Whether this may be said to respond to the increasing preference of Spanish and European avant-garde artists to delve simultaneously into different creative practices or to Lorca's personal taste for artistic experimentation, intermediality is doubtless a prominent aspect of his aesthetics, revealing a crucial facet of his self-awareness as an eclectic and versatile artist.

### **Lorquian Word-Image Relations: Sensory Poetics, Calligrams and Fluidity**

Lorca's late years are characterised by his simultaneous production of literature, theatre, art, cinema and photography. Nonetheless, some of his earlier works already played with

the limits of media and often tried to bring words, images and music together. Apart from the multimediality of *Poeta en Nueva York*, in whose edition Lorca planned to include drawings and photographs, *Poema del Cante Jondo* contained poems imitating the rhythms, sounds and performance of flamenco, while in *Canciones* or *Romancero Gitano* he often played with the viscosity of poetic images or sought to mix the five senses to explore different levels of perception.<sup>81</sup>

In his later corpus, though, Lorca's works become more evidently aware of the media transferences and combinations taking place. His return to canonical forms in the traditional versification of the late poetry proves to be a way to make the connection form/content much more intricate and self-conscious. Technical restrictions and traditional poetic forms allow the poet to mix the unconventionality of his poetic images with well-known formats and to explore new perceptive possibilities emerging from recognisable formal aspects. The late poems are also characterised by their emphasis on viscosity: the imagery relies heavily on metaphors and metonymies featuring elements like synaesthesia, *chiaroscuro* and multiple colour contrasts. Conversely, Lorca's drawings are an attempt to let his poetic voice speak through an entirely different medium, combining image and language intra-compositionally but also reproducing elements from the poems via graphic elements. His expanding late corpus of drawings contained graphic works that have been defined as linear poems or pure lyrical abstractions (Plaza Chillón 2014: 217). Exploring through a new medium some of the images created in his poetry as well as original ones, his late drawings become artefacts with a myriad word-image combinations full of depth and complex connotations, worth

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<sup>81</sup> El canto quiere ser luz.

En lo oscuro el canto tiene  
hilos de fósforo y luna ('[El canto quiere ser luz]', *Canciones*, OC I: 273)

Verde que te quiero verde.

Verde viento. Verdes ramas. ('Romance sonámbulo', *Romancero Gitano*, OC I: 400).



being considered plastic poems or poetic drawings. *Viaje a la luna*'s film script configuration is an example of an ontological intermedium (Schröter 2011: 3): a medium which is not quite poetry and not quite image, but which combines elements of both and becomes an intermediate state between literature and film.

The emphasis on strict rhythmic and rhyming elements in the various poetic forms Lorca used in *Diván del Tamarit* and *Sonetos del amor oscuro* (sonnet, gacela, casida) establishes an intimate relationship between the poetic medium, the viscosity of the writing, the line organisation and structuring, and the images represented, as well as its musicality. Although this might not be new to Lorca's poetry (he used the sonnet and other traditional poetic formats in his earlier works) or indeed to poetry in general, it is certainly a formal feature that acts intermedially, imitating the elements of visual media to enhance the meaning inherent in the language. The insistence on recognisable poetic forms makes the contrast with previous experimental forms more palpable: the radical opposition to *Poeta en Nueva York*'s free verse is the most obvious example. Brevity characterises the three poetic types in the late poetry, which implies a sense of immediacy mirroring the lack of long running lines or extended semantic connections within the poems. These often present short, finite, juxtaposed images accelerating the process of perception, a graphic element which incidentally becomes the basis of *Viaje a la luna*. This effect, produced by short images within short poems, imitates the fast aspect of viscosity —a glance at an image is enough to see it entirely. This implies that there is an intentional added meaning in this choice, and indeed a tight relationship between the different sensory levels activated in the reading process. This added meaning brings the three media in Lorca's late works together, as if they were in constant dialogue: different channels to explore similar ideas and express them with as many resources as Lorca could find, while all maintaining a rigorous resemblance to the transgressive spirit of *duende*.

As disparate as all the references found in *Teoría y juego del duende* itself, the late works articulate through different media the unifying principles of Lorca's aesthetics: the search for *lo insólito* and the queering of limits.

Looking more closely at the late works in search of these principles, it is clear that visual-verbal connections in the poems find a suitable ally in Lorca's frequent use of synaesthesia and the blurring of the five senses. His sensory poetics emphasises the multimediality of the perceptive process. Thus, he makes blood be heard and sparkle like shining swords, he creates apple trees with sighing apples, or shadows which sound like elephants stomping:

La sangre sonará por las alcobas  
y vendrá con espadas fulgurantes,  
pero tú no sabrás dónde se ocultan  
el corazón del sapo o la violeta.  
(‘Casida de la mujer tendida’ 2010: 41, ll. 9-12)

El Tamarit tiene un manzano  
con una manzana de sollozos.  
[...]  
La penumbra con paso de elefante  
empujaba las ramas y los troncos.  
(‘Casida de los ramos’ 2010: 39, ll. 5-6; 15-16)

Metaphors, metonymy, alliterations and sensory associations reinforce the attempt to combine visual and verbal elements within the poetic medium to fuse and blur the five senses. Seeking to create images that shock and produce a sense of novelty, the poet constantly finds ways to redefine or apply new qualities to sensory images:

Vino la noche clara,  
 turbia de plata mala,  
 con peladas montañas  
 bajo la brisa parda.  
 ('Casida de la muchacha dorada' 2010: 49, ll. 8-11)

Reversing the image of the night to make it first clear as day and then muddy or shady as 'bad silver', the sense of sight is challenged to adapt to each new poetic image, while the subsequent metaphors play with sight through personification (the bare mountains are 'peeled') and synaesthesia (a breeze can be heard or felt, but can rarely be coloured 'brown'). The unexpected semantic associations escaping logic and congruity prompt the reader to think in visual terms in order to grasp the meanings that, despite syntactic coherence, elude mere linguistic referentiality.

In most of Lorca's late poetry, there is a semantic opaqueness in the word associations and incongruous image juxtapositions he creates, which 'brings them very close to Surrealist practice' (Harris 1998: 98) and contrasts with the rhythmic and metric adherence to traditional poetic forms. Images often flow unconstrained by logical relations or narrative progressions:

Flor de jazmín y toro degollado.  
 Pavimento infinito. Mapa. Sala. Arpa. Alba  
 La niña sueña un toro de jazmines  
 y el toro es un sangriento crepúsculo que brama.  
 ('Casida del sueño al aire libre' 2010: 43, ll. 1-4)

Alluding to the oneiric in the very title of the poem, despite Lorca's emphatic rejection of Surrealist practices like automatic writing or painting and the primacy of dreams,<sup>82</sup>

'Casida del sueño al aire libre' should either be taken as a dream described in poetic terms or as simply a series of juxtaposed images with no apparent relation to one another. The asyndetic succession of short phrases and nouns in the first stanza does, however, hinge on the viscosity of the images created and on the graphic and phonic relationships among them. First, the jasmine flower, the decapitated bull and the infinite pavement, while unrelated, do share aspects suggesting a sensory proximity: they can all be contemplated in nature and they offer a sharp colour contrast. The whiteness of jasmine against the black bull lead the way to the possible greyness of the pavement, while anticipating the bright red blood that soon reappears as the bull bleeds in the colour of twilight. The pavement, the bull's assassination, the girl and the homophonic words all suggest man's presence against nature, conjuring a natural/artificial opposition. This is reinforced by the four isolated nouns in the second line: 'mapa', 'sala', 'arpa', 'alba' (map, room, harp, sunrise). This play on the assonance of the words and their phonic and graphic amalgamation clearly reinforces the connection form/content and verbal/visual in the poem. The poet goes from one word to the next by simply changing the consonants while the vowel 'a' is repeated. In a declension of sorts, he explores the multiple possibilities allowed by poetic language while also adding further contrasting images to the stanza. In addition, the graphic brevity of the successive images in the first two lines gradually accelerates the rhythm of the juxtapositions, and hence the sharp contrast and sudden transformations they suffer. Ever since Ancient Greece, poetry was meant to be recited, providing it with an aural sensory meaning through performance which Lorca consciously

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<sup>82</sup> Lorca often discussed his reticence to Surrealist practices in his letters to art critic and close friend Sebastián Gasch: 'Gasch no es partidario del surrealismo, y esto Lorca lo sabe; en varias ocasiones insiste a su confidente catalán el intento de negar cualquier tentación de entregarse a las fuerzas del automatismo o del inconsciente' (Plaza Chillón 2008: 15).

includes in his poems. Indeed, he mentions this aspect in *Teoría y juego del duende*, conceding that *duende* is more easily transmitted through spoken poetry. His sensory poetics is clearly aware that aural meaning is joined to language and can be accentuated, even if the poem is not read out loud.

The elements in the casida also find a way into Lorca's late drawings and film script: some of the drawings use this assonant repetition of words ('Put a y luna' [Fig. 21], 'Marinero del amor' [Fig. 11], both ca.1934), while high-speed image juxtapositions are profusely created in *Viaje a la luna*. In the drawing 'Put a y luna' [Fig. 21], the suggestive and derogatory term 'puta', is declined or transformed to accommodate multiple vowel combinations ('puta', 'peta', 'pota', 'pita', 'pata') while retaining the same consonants and thus creating a clear rhythm within the drawing. Conversely, from the title it may be inferred that either the connection between the words 'puta' and 'luna' is purely linguistic, or that the femininity usually ascribed to the moon is perversely mocked with an insult. Also, sexual and deathly connotations abound in relation to both words. The moon almost always carries ominous and tragic consequences in Lorca's works (the images of death juxtaposed with moons in *Viaje a la luna* are one among a myriad examples), and his late plays usually pair the figure of the 'fallen woman', judged and condemned by social norms, with fate, suffering and mortality (La Novia in *Bodas de sangre* is warned by the moon itself that her extramarital desires will bring fatal consequences; and Adela, Paca la Roseta and la Hija de la Librada in *La casa de Bernarda Alba* are harshly subjected to scorn or even killed for what in their sociopolitical context are considered illicit sexual relations). Nonetheless, both the connotative connection and the linguistic/graphic/phonic fusion between 'puta' and 'luna' attest to the playful combination created by the poet. The well-known squiggly lines from other drawings are used here to join all these words together simulating a single stroke, a continuous line encircling the whole composition

into an irregular shape. Contained within this frame is a fantastical animal coloured in red, resembling a horse in its long tail made up of thin extending lines and its long mouth but also a dog or a lion in its short paws —one of them black and claw-like, reaching up and incidentally pointing at the word ‘pata’ itself — and its hairy head with a mane of sorts. The bottom-right end of the main circular line ends in the shape of a waxing or waning moon coloured black, directly opposite the word ‘luna’ at the top of the drawing. Throughout this multifarious composition, Lorca repeats the playful deformation of words into nonsensical elements from his poems, while simultaneously pointing to the rhythmic harmony that their assonance creates. He combines words and images seamlessly, but alludes to the sharp contrast between the formal aspects and their signification, the signifiers and the signifieds, a relationship that is anything but straightforward. While the word ‘luna’ in the drawing has a graphic counterpart and the ‘pata’ might be mirroring the drawn animal’s paw, the other words are random and only hinge on their nonsensical nature, purely derived from their homographic resemblance to ‘puta’ and ‘luna’. Perhaps even the poet himself could be included in the mix as ‘poeta’, another plausible combination which could easily be elicited from this varied array. The presence of the words is as unexpected as that of the fantastical animal, all of them objects which become hard to identify or explain. These odd, indeed queer, objects are joined together, literally, by Lorca’s line, and therefore question the logic of the drawing as well as their own meaning within it. The only thing holding them together is the process of creation, the poetics which can give life to these unwonted and incongruous realities and encircle them in a cyclical graphic poem. The constant baptism of newly-created things is what *duende* stands for, so in both ‘Gacela del sueño al aire libre’ and ‘Put a y luna’, the apparent incongruity of mixing words and images, nonsensical words with signifying ones, the mundane and the fantastical, nature and man, is embraced and

also questioned. Simultaneously brought together but also exposed as dissonant and queer, all these disparate elements converge through Lorca's hand and create a dual sense of pleasure and discomfort, a fantasy in which they can all coexist but which threatens to be destroyed by illogical nonsense and incongruity.

The same incongruity appears profusely in *Viaje a la luna*. To the many disparate objects juxtaposed as a series of tableaux throughout most of the film script must be added the transformation of words included in some of the segments. In segment thirty-four, a successive series of doors being slammed shut presents the female name 'Elena' on each of them, but the word is transposed into a new version with each closing door: 'Helena', 'elhena', 'eLHeNa'. This further 'declension' does not change the letters or the sound of the word, but rearranges them and plays with their visual aspect, so the distortion keeps the rhythm and meaning of the words almost intact. Lorca, aware that this film script was the embryo of a cinematic work, is able to play with linguistic and visual aspects through yet another medium. For the potential viewer of the finished film, this word distortion would be as disconcerting as those from the poems and the drawings, but this time the visual aspect of the word transformation acquires more prominence. Here Lorca exercises his queering of words to detach their linguistic meaning from their graphic and visual meanings, thus creating unexpected distortions of Elena: the word, the name or the character it conjures. However, although there are several female characters in the film script, it remains unclear whether Elena names any of them.

The appearance of the name 'Elena' has been subject to much conjecture. It has been related to the classical Helen of Troy, to the appearance of a Helena in *El público*, and to Eleanor Gove, the woman for whom Emilio Aladrén allegedly left Lorca before he

went to New York.<sup>83</sup> In the context of *Viaje a la luna*, the transposition of the name Elena appears after a sequence in which the two women dressed in black, themselves transformed into monster-creatures with wiry hands, cry desperately, and the close-up of a female head vomits. One of the two dark women also falls down a staircase and images of her bloody nose, a close-up of her head upside down and close-ups of veins and grains of salt are juxtaposed. The drawing ‘Muerte de Santa Rodegunda’ (1929) [Fig 23], in which an agonising distorted creature vomits violently on a bed, also makes an appearance in this sequence, ‘incarcerated’ by a set of prison cell bars superimposed. The non-specificity and veiled identities of most female characters in *Viaje* mirrors the uncertainty surrounding the elusive Elena, whose name is presented under so many ‘guises’ that it is hard to establish whether she really exists or which of the women she represents. The continuous uncertainty and disorientation presented in *Viaje a la luna* is suitably matched to the queering of words and images, such that Lorca’s fluid transformation of the verbal into the visual mirrors the metamorphic bodies and characters in the film script.

It is clear that one of the most prominent aspects of Lorca’s *duende* aesthetics is precisely fluidity, understood as the transgression and constant transformation of norms and limits defining or identifying subjects, objects or media themselves. Thus, there are examples of this limit-breaking fluidity across Lorca’s late multimedia works which can be analysed in parallel. In *Diván del Tamarit*’s ‘Gacela del amor desesperado’, the poet sets out to disrupt the laws of time, placing his desire for the beloved against the norms of logic and meaning. One of these crucial norms has to do with the limits separating life and death, a norm which in this poem is linked to the logical succession of events or the linearity of time. The language of the poem alters this succession by syncretising the

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<sup>83</sup> Ian Gibson makes these connections in the *Making of* video of Frederic Amat’s filmic adaptation of *Viaje a la luna*.



structure of the poems with the meanings of the images represented. Visual and verbal elements work in unison so that their meanings converge, in turn making the spatiotemporal elements of the poem coalesce as well. Conversely, Lorca's calligrams from around this time — 'Rosa de la muerte' (1934) [Fig. 22] and 'Mierda. Caligrama' (ca. 1934-36) [Fig. 24]— use the interrelation of word and image to explore a similar process of disruption, while the grotesque and transgressive 'Muerte de Santa Rodegunda' appears both in drawing form and as part of the cinematic *Viaje a la luna*.

The cohesion and convergence of multimedia meanings is examined by Borkent (2010) in his study of innovative poetic artefacts such as concrete poems, which he also calls visual poems.<sup>84</sup> He argues that 'many visual poems [...] rely on verbal and visual prompts coalescing into a broader meaning' (Borkent, 2010: 147), which points to the idea that media (or elements typically associated with certain media) do not exist in isolation but in relation to other media, since the elements channelled through a certain medium acquire meaning in conjunction with the medium itself. Therefore, some conclude that 'the medium is the message' (McLuhan 1964), or more precisely, that the medium certainly contributes to the meaning of the artefact together with the rest of its intra-compositional elements. Lorca's late poems, his calligrams and the multimediality of *Viaje a la luna* demonstrate that multiple levels of meaning extracted from different media are at work simultaneously and manage to create a wider meaning through the conjunction of all of them.

Although its typography is conventional, in 'Gacela del amor desesperado', the visual meaning of the images plays an important part in enhancing the verbal meaning expressed and adding spatiotemporal cues. Night and day are the two poles in between

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<sup>84</sup> Concrete poetry would be the more general term encompassing calligrams and other kinds of poetic artefacts in which the formal or typographical organisation of the poem or parts of the poem creates a visual element intrinsically related to the content or meaning in the poem.

which the poet and his addressee are represented. The limits between both times are unclear and undetermined, as are the positions and identities of the lovers. The liminal state of the poet and his lover is described as the only spatiotemporal realm in which their union is possible, although this union takes place inevitably through suffering and death. If desire never achieves the fulfilment it seeks, it will lead to nothingness, but the poet's wish for death perseveres nonetheless. A hypothetical fulfilment would mean a lack of purpose to the poet and his lover, so liminality is the preferable state for them:

La noche no quiere venir  
para que tú no vengas,  
ni yo pueda ir.

Pero yo iré,  
aunque un sol de alacranes me coma la sien.

Pero tu vendrás  
con la lengua quemada por la lluvia de sal.

El día no quiere venir  
para que tú no vengas,  
ni yo pueda ir.

Pero yo iré  
entregando a los sapos mi mordido clavel.

Pero tu vendrás  
por las turbias cloacas de la oscuridad. (2010: 15, ll. 1-14)

The images in the poem mirror the polarity of night and day through the use of *chiaroscuro*. However, the conventional values of light and darkness are also reversed

and disrupted, such that darkness adopts positive connotations at first and then becomes negativised and vice versa. In this gacela, the *chiaroscuro* reinforces the linguistic meaning in the poem making use of visual prompts that situate the reader on a sensory plane of perception. The permeability that light and darkness acquire creates a fictive movement that transports the reader from one to the other side of the visual spectrum. This allows for the final stanza to become an appraisal of death as a creative force rather than a destructive one, a disruption of its conventional meaning, and a reminder that corporeality entails both creation and destruction, desire and death. Connelly identifies these processes as one of the key aspects of the grotesque artistic image: ‘actions that are both destructive and constructive’ (2003: 2) are a means to challenge the norm and create an impact on the reader. This positions the queer —i.e. what has fallen from the normative and is opposed to it— as the most valuable artistic reality, since this break from the norm directed towards the dark, the grotesque, the boundary, is to Lorca ‘what is substantial in art’ (*OC* III: 311) because it perpetuates the creative process.

As in other gacelas, conflict and unfulfilled desire are needed for the poet to express his longing and desperate passion for his beloved, but the wound of this desire attacks the finitude and stability of the lovers’ bodies. The will to overcome this conflict in pursuit of each other results in the representation of the lovers in grotesque forms: ‘Pero yo iré, | aunque un sol de alacranes me coma la sien | Pero tú vendrás | con la lengua quemada por la lluvia de sal’. The poet’s head half-eaten by a sun of scorpions and the beloved’s tongue burnt by salt rain are two corporeal forms in decay, stuck between living and dying. Two representations of the grotesque which allude to pain and suffering, but also to strength and determination, imply that it is in the wounds that desire is found. Both the poet and the beloved ‘are dying for each other’, a purposely ambivalent metaphorical phrase which sums up the desire/death reversibility:

Ni la noche ni el día quieren venir  
 para que por ti muera  
 y tú mueras por mí. (2010: 15, ll. 15-17)

Leaving the resolution of the conflict open-ended, the final lines of the *gacela* take place in a non-place and a non-time, since at this point spatiotemporal limits have ceased to exist. Neither day nor night wants to arrive so that the lovers can love/die for each other.

The fictive movement of night into day and day into night is in turn combined with the propositional movement explicit in the verbs ‘ir’ and ‘venir’, which in their future forms ‘iré’ and ‘vendrás’ synthesise the alternating movement of going and coming, the alternating musicality of their rhyme (e-a) and the visuality of their also alternating light associations within each stanza (night-sun-day-darkness). The final alternating elements are the poet and his addressee, yo and tú, who are equally included in this pendular motion running throughout the poem. The limits between each other are suppressed, such that their opposition becomes blurred. This idea echoes the Surrealist principles put forward by André Breton in his *Manifesto of Surrealism*, where he describes the search for a state of *surreality*, ‘where life and death, the real and the imaginary, past and future, the communicable and the incommunicable, high and low cease to be perceived as contradictory’ (1972: 123). In this liminal state, the poem can accommodate a multiplicity of sensorial elements, all of which can work simultaneously. The process of perception is thus multi-layered and the limits between the visual and the verbal are queered.

This is further exemplified in ‘Gacela del amor con cien años’, in which to visual and linguistic meanings is added a musical element from the flamenco tradition (which had also been employed in Lorca’s *Poema del Cante Jondo* back in 1921). Form and

content are significantly related in this poem, in that the couplets and choruses are repeated to imitate both the implied pendular movement or transience of the characters in the poem, walking up and down the street as time goes by; and the musical rhythm alluded to in the structure of the poem, simulating the stanza-chorus pattern of a song:

Suben por la calle  
 los cuatro galanes.  
*Ay, ay, ay, ay.*  
 Por la calle abajo  
 van los tres galanes.  
*Ay, ay, ay.*  
 Se ciñen el talle  
 esos dos galanes.  
*Ay, ay.*  
 ¡Cómo vuelve el rostro  
 un galán y el aire!  
*Ay.*  
 Por los arrayanes  
 se pasea nadie. (2010: 31)

The choruses emitting ‘quejío’ sounds (‘Ay’), reproducing the typically Andalusian flamenco cry of pain and desperation but also of intense emotion in song, can be linguistic equivalents of the four ‘galanes’ who one by one become absent with the progress of each of the couplets. Thus, the linguistic movement implied by the verbs ‘subir’, ‘volver’, ‘pasear’ and the verbal phrase ‘ir abajo’ in four of the five couplets is reinforced by the fictive movement of the visual downwards line created by the symmetrical choruses decreasing in length (from four ays to one in the last instance). The triangle created on the page points to the bottom of the poem, where the ays stop and ‘nobody’ is left, whilst the meanings of ‘walk up’ and ‘walk down’ are introduced in the

first two couplets, directing the reader downwards as well. The rhythmic symmetry of the couplet-chorus pattern and the fictive musical sound of the poem punctuate the progression of the poem, adding an extra element to the visual movement of the choruses downwards and the fictive movement signified in the couplets. This poetic movement bears in turn further significations.

The last couplet sees the solitary myrtle bushes on supposedly the same street as the beginning, where nobody is walking anymore. However, this last line's syntax is intentionally transposed to make the subject of the action 'nadie', suggesting that this 'nobody' is also a character, albeit one devoid of human substance, or the personification of nothingness. Nothingness is then the result of time in the poem, the state to which all the previous gentlemen have been subjected and the endpoint towards which their lives are inevitably bound. Time and space are thus two important forces in which the *gacela* is inscribed. The title already suggests the passage of time, 'Love with one hundred years', so we might suppose that the poet is referencing the universality and atemporality of the sentiment. However, as the poem progresses, there is a sense that all that time does in the poem is drive the characters closer to their death, their disappearance and erasure from space and materiality. The laments interspersed with the stanzas accentuate this disappointing realisation, themselves also decreasing in number as the gentlemen do. The space, although at first sight might seem the same, mutates as well as the characters, since the poem starts at the bottom of the street, implying a movement upwards but then returning as the now remaining three gentlemen walk down the street. The space of the third stanza is none other than the very bodies of the now two gentlemen, who ambiguously tighten their waistbands (each their own or reciprocally in a tight embrace), as the poetic voice is observing them as a voyeur of sorts. This stanza supposes a change in the poetic space, announcing the movement from the public sphere to a private, even

internal realm and ending in an ambiguous setting where the location and the boundaries between self and other become blurry. At the end of the poem, the scene described has lost specificity: there are no spatial or time references and the poetic voice has disappeared, blurred into the disintegrating image of ‘nobody’. There are no clues as to who is speaking or where they are, except for the ambiguous reference to the bushes, perhaps because ‘nobody’ is there and therefore it is an unknown space outside the concrete poetic space where the gentlemen were situated before. The disappearance of the ‘ays’ and the mirrored disappearance of the gentlemen lead the reader to the visual nothingness that follows the end of the triangular shape formed by the choruses and the propositional nothingness implied in the last line. This nothingness refers once more to an abstract place of ‘surreality’, a non-place and non-time in which spatiotemporal limits can cease to exist.

One of the advantages of a drawing is that the spatiotemporal abstraction acquired in these gacelas can be more easily represented graphically. Lorca’s late drawings rarely have a concrete background space, and very often they consist of objects floating in the centre of the composition, surrounded by empty space or nothingness. ‘Manos cortadas’ [Fig. 12], ‘Rostro con flechas’ [Fig. 17], ‘Labios’ [Fig. 4] and most of the calligrams contain this spatiotemporal abstraction. In the case of calligrams, poem/drawing hybrids in which the typographical organisation of letters and words creates the shape of an object sometimes relating to the content of the poem, abstraction is paired with the intricate combination of the visual and the verbal. In ‘Rosa de la muerte’ [Fig. 4], one of the drawings Lorca made in Argentina to illustrate Ricardo Molinari’s collector’s edition of *Una rosa para Stefan George*, a simplified and repetitive poetic composition is developed into a cross-like drawing creating a long-stemmed rose. Read from top to bottom and from the flower’s round petals to its extending roots, the lines focus on the

four elements air, water, fire and earth, but also on death, temporality, desire and the body:

AIRE para tu boca  
 Tierra Tierra Tierra  
 y Madera y Madera y Madera  
 cuerpo cuerpo cuerpo cuerpo  
 y Nunca  
 nunca nunca nunca nunca nunca nunca  
 y siempre y siempre y siempre  
 y siempre y siempre y siempre  
 MUERTEE MU MUERTE MEU  
 Muerte y Muerte  
 AGUA PARA TU AMOR  
 FUEGO PARA TU CENIZA  
 Muerte y Muerte y Muerte  
 Tierra PARA TU ALMA  
 Muerte y Muerte y Muerte.

As in many calligrams, the content of the linguistic elements mirrors the graphic result of their irregular organisation. Air is placed at the very top of the composition, crowning the rose above a group of multiple fine dots that animate the petals both above and in its centre. The petals themselves are contoured by the words ‘Tierra’, ‘Madera’, ‘Cuerpo’, ‘Nunca’, ‘Siempre’, all of them repeated or joined by the conjunction ‘y’ both around the external shape of the flower and within the petals. At the centre of the flower’s corolla, the capitalised word MUERTE is doubled and tripled, its letters transposed and reorganised forming a circle, which is in turn completed by a group of semicircular lines travelling along the bottom of the word. Stemming, literally, from the flower’s deathly core, ‘muerte’ travels down the long stem creating side leaves along its course and



finishing in a triangular base representing a plot of earth in the ground whose bottom ends in fine extending roots. Mirroring the 'air' above the flower at the top, the word 'earth' is inscribed linguistically and graphically within this triangle. The mid-section of the stem is traversed horizontally by two parallel undulating lines, resembling a long piece of ribbon or string tied around the rose's stem in which written lines are inscribed or even arm-like thick branches extending to both sides of the flower. In these, two further contradictory elements appear: water and fire, one nurturing love and the other reducing it to ashes. The syncretism of linguistic and graphic elements in the calligram also includes that of the unrelated words thrown together in the composition, which can be related to the image of the rose but which also work individually as lines in a poem would. The resulting image of the rose is literally and graphically formed by the four elements nurturing it (water, earth, air) or potentially destroying it (fire), but simultaneously other poetic elements are included by Lorca in the drawing, some human (*madera, cuerpo, boca, alma, ceniza*) and some temporal (*siempre, nunca, muerte*).

The rose has quintessential love connotations in poetry, and its red colour has traditionally been associated with romance and passion, but also with blood (often in connection with its thorns) and suffering. Thus it is a very apt image to encapsulate the poetic connection between desire and death at work in the calligram. As simply as the naïve composition of *Diván's* 'Casida de la rosa' does, 'Rosa de la muerte' presents a queer object which tries to supersede the limits between being and non-being. It is a poem but simultaneously a drawing. Its object is alive but has death at its core, it is driven by desire but this desire ends in mortality, it combines the four elements that give it life but can also destroy it, and it is suspended in an uncertain time and an indeterminate space, both 'always' and 'never' existing.

A contemporaneous calligram entitled 'Mierda. Caligrama' [Fig. 24] takes an approach which differs from the rose calligram and indeed from traditional calligrams. Hispanic authors like Vicente Huidobro, Guillermo de Torre or Gerardo Diego and especially the French Guillaume Apollinaire had popularised the poetic calligram in the early twentieth century. In their works, it is usually assumed that the image created in a calligram is related to the content of the poem itself. This is not, or barely so in 'Mierda. Caligrama', where the repetition of the word 'Mierda' (shit) three times and in gradually different sizes creates an incongruous image not resembling any concrete object at all. The circularity of the composition is accentuated by the initial 'm' letter of the word, going up and developing the giant word horizontally but then changing direction and ending with the final 'a' letter upside down after a giant 'D' positioned at the other end of the circle. This giant 'mierda' is thus made illegible, but two smaller 'mierdas' also stem from the original giant 'm'. The dots on the 'i's are made of thicker dark small circles scattered around the drawing, one of them at the bottom only coloured in half, which makes it contain a small waning moon. As in other Lorquian drawings, the continuous but irregular line unifies the whole composition into a single stroke, such that all the differently sized words are joined together. Standing alone towards the top right corner is a group of small thicker sinewy lines, resembling small worms or even cartoonish signs of a bad smell (both probably results of the unseemly poetic matter from which they emanate). The irregular configuration of two of the three words (the giant one and the smaller one towards the centre-left of the drawing) suggests a scribbling process, as if the writerly hand had given up halfway through the word and decided to make it illegible and nonsensical, ruining the writing process and turning it into waste. The calligram thus fuses the linguistic meaning of the words repeated with the lack of meaning (or purposeful nonsense) of abstract drawings, adding a humorous or sarcastic tone in the

inclusion of the politically incorrect ‘shit’. This is a particularly suggestive aspect, since it remains unclear whether Lorca is subversively confronting the viewer with the very image of disgust, however abstractly, or passing judgment on his own work which has been made into literal and visual shit by his own hand.

Tying in with the subversive images of disgust that recur in Lorca’s works after his New York years, especially prominent in *Viaje a la luna* and *Poeta en Nueva York*, is the drawing ‘Muerte de Santa Rodegunda’ [Fig. 23]. Drawn in 1929 at the beginning of Lorca’s sojourn in the United States, it depicts an amorphous two-headed figure lying on a bed and vomiting violently into a brown basin while bleeding through its wounded chest and genital area. Santa Radegunda (520-587) (the different spelling in the drawing might be an error on Lorca’s part or a purposeful distortion to re-appropriate the name of the saint) was a French princess canonised in the 9th century. Llera suggests that Lorca might have been interested in her biography due to her avid efforts to avoid being married to her kidnapper, Merovingian king Clotario the first, and her subsequent refusal to relinquish her virginity (2011: 201). The deathly title, the contorted position of the vomiting figure and the intense red colour of the vomit also scattered around the edges of the drawing suggest the disturbing gushing of blood from the character’s mouth and genitalia and therefore its painful agony and death.<sup>85</sup> However, the creature, presumably Santa Rodegunda, does not present clear human features except for two sets of eyes on each of its heads formed by disproportionate dark ovals. The bigger head, containing a smaller one, has white ovals resulting in a blank expression, while the small head has black ones, resembling an eye mask or dark glasses. Apart from the red colour of the blood, forming thick strokes that stain the drawing, and the brown colour of the basin, the

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<sup>85</sup> Llera traces the motif of the blood vomit, or *haematemesis*, back to accounts from the *Corpus Hippocraticum* and some passages of *The Iliad* (2011: 201).

rest of the contours in the drawing are made of very thin lines which accentuate the monochromatic and almost diffused aspect of the figure and the bed, both nearly blurred and fading into each other. The slender and stretched out arms and legs of Santa Rodegunda, drawn with sinewy and blurry lines, adopt a malleable shape which also confounds their contours with those of the bed. Thus, the body of the figure becomes uncertain and shapeless, doubling some of its parts like two bodies superimposed over each other.

This uneven composition contrasting the amorphous and grotesque body of the creature with the intensity of the blood and vomit emanating from it aptly evokes the fragmented bodies in *Viaje a la luna*, of which the drawing is also part. Like the juxtaposed corporeal fragments and bodily issue in the film script were animated by the rapid succession of tableaux, in the drawing the perceived intensity of the gushing fluids animates the blurry background and incidentally becomes the nexus between the limits of life and death. Whether agonising, menstruating, defecating or being disgusted, and whether male, female or neither, the creature in the drawing is made alive by the power of blood and excretion, both usually unseen but inevitably a crucial part of human bodies. The creature's mouth and its sex, both sites of interaction between the body and the outer world, also become the points of convergence of the creature's desire and its mortality. As Bakhtin posited, the limit between human bodies and the world is crossed through interactions such as eating, drinking, vomiting or defecating, since the orifices through which these actions take place become points of convergence and transformation, the confines on which 'the beginning and end of life are closely linked and interwoven' (1984: 317). Lorca's obsession with the blurring of these limits explains Santa Rodegunda's grotesque nature, almost devoid of any sign of humanity or identification but still determined by both her mortality and her living body, open through

its wounds and in the throes of deconstruction. Rodegunda's unique embodiment of the grotesque acts linking living and dying through bodily issue also resonates with Julia Kristeva's idea of abjection.<sup>86</sup> Kristeva conjures abjection as a place in which boundaries are broken down because it precedes linguistic binaries such as self/other or subject/object. What a subject throws aside as he/she moves into the symbolic order and is constituted into a social body remains a threat to identity, a reminder of death. The abject refers to the human reaction to a threatened breakdown in meaning caused by the loss of the distinction between self and other and between life and death:

A wound with blood and pus, or the sickly, acrid smell of sweat, of decay [...] *show me* what I permanently thrust aside in order to live. These body fluids, this defilement, this shit are what life withstands, hardly and with difficulty, on the part of death. There, I am at the border of my condition as a living being.  
(Kristeva 1982: 3)

The acts of vomiting and bleeding, much like in Lorca's idea of *duende* as a wound transgressing the limits of life and death, threaten the boundaries delimiting the body's finitude, discreteness and fixity, confounding what is inside and outside and what is alive and dead, thus reversing the norms of bodily interactions with the world.

This powerful and shocking effect of the grotesque in 'Muerte de Santa Rodegunda' explains its inclusion among the amalgam of images similarly crossing life/death, humour/disgust and pleasure/pain boundaries in *Viaje a la luna*. In turn, the media crossover between drawing, film and poetry in which this graphic work participates unites

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<sup>86</sup> In Llera's view, the abject in 'Muerte de Santa Rodegunda' refers to images of transgression because they introduce the ambiguous, what does not respect boundaries or norms (2011: 214). Wright and Larson both look at Kristeva's idea of the abject in relation to Lorca's *El público* (Wright 2000: 117) and to *Viaje a la luna* (Larson 2011: 311) respectively.

*Poeta en Nueva York*, the film script and Lorca's *duende* aesthetics, never confined to only one medium but queering the limits of all of them.

### **Roots and Hands: Reaching Out to the Other**

Focusing on the recurrent motifs explored in Lorca's late years, the hand is probably one of the most prominent ones. Its evident reference to the craftsmanship of the writer-artist also resonates with the importance of the five senses in the poet's imagery. In addition, the inclusion of roots systems 'growing' and extending from or near hands often evokes both the relationship between man and nature as well as the limits between the living and the inert or the dead. The roots resembling vein systems or the 'arborization of nerve axons' (Cavanaugh 2003: 195)<sup>87</sup> respond to Lorca's conviction that no object is too small or too ordinary to become a poetic image. He sustains that a poet can create an epic poem on the exciting battle among leucocytes in the foliage of veins ('de la emocionante lucha que sostienen los leucocitos en el ramaje de las venas') (*OC* III: 240), which reinforces the multidisciplinary and sensory nature of his aesthetics. His dictum 'un poeta tiene que ser profesor en los cinco sentidos corporales' (*OC* III: 225) is reassessed or expanded in the late works in order to explore how the five bodily senses can be distorted and their limits reconfigured and transgressed. The image of the wound splitting the skin and breaking the limits between life and death pervades these multimedia artefacts. As the body is destructured and wounded to show its malleability and reversibility, the five senses ingrained in that body become transposed as well.

The connection/disconnection aspects of the drawings 'Manos cortadas' [Fig. 12],

'Labios (Walking around)' [Fig. 4] and the incongruous interactions in *Viaje a la luna*

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<sup>87</sup> Cavanaugh notes the popularity among Lorca's contemporaries of scientific studies of anatomy by scientists like Ramón y Cajal, usually accompanied by anatomical drawings of nerve cells or vein systems, and the fascination of artists with scientific advances and motifs extracted from scientific disciplines, which became a staple of the Spanish avant-garde.

find a lyrical counterpart in the ‘Casida de la mano imposible’ and the ‘Gacela de la raíz amarga’ from *Diván del Tamarit*. In the former, the wounded hand becomes the only agent trusted by the poet, the only certain key to access the creation and destruction of identity:

Yo no quiero más que una mano,  
una mano herida, si es posible.  
Yo no quiero más que una mano,  
aunque pase mil noches sin lecho.

Sería un pálido lirio de cal,  
sería una paloma amarrada a mi corazón,  
sería el guardián que en la noche de mi tránsito  
prohibiera en absoluto la entrada a la luna.

Yo no quiero más que esa mano  
para los diarios aceites y la sábana blanca de mi agonía.  
Yo no quiero más que esa mano  
para tener un ala de mi muerte.

Lo demás todo pasa.  
Rubor sin nombre ya. Astro perpetuo.  
Lo demás es lo otro; viento triste,  
mientras las hojas huyen en bandadas. (2010: 45)

The poet conjures an impossible wounded hand to assist him in the process of knowing himself and making sense of his own existence through the poem. Thus, the hand would help him be aware of his mortality (‘el guardián [...] en la noche de mi tránsito’), as it would embalm him with daily oils and a white shroud and give him ‘a wing of his death’, perhaps even offer alleviation from the fear of mortality. Although it is unclear whether

the poet's need for this wounded hand implies the call for human contact, the loneliness of the lyrical 'I' in the poem is palpable. He is ready to spend a thousand nights without a bed ('lecho' very often connotes either a conjugal or a dying bed), he compares the hand with a pale limescale lily and a dove clinging to his heart and sees in it his deathly guardian who would forbid his entrance into the moon. The poet undoubtedly stands alone against all these evocative images, and concludes that 'everything else passes' and 'everything else is the other'.

This poetic voice resembles all the lonely mouths whose lips float about in 'Labios', conjoined by a single line but exuding isolation in their 'walk' around the single dark dot standing for the moon or an eye. The poet is also a reminder of the three solitary men in *Viaje a la luna* who stare up at the moon among sudden images of death and decay, and especially, of the Man of Veins whose awareness and embodiment of mortality make him an impossible and queer subject, stuck between life and death but whose open wounds suggest infinite recreations and multiple identities as opposed to 'the others', those sleepwalking customers in the bar whose disgust is provoked by desires that cannot be quenched. In the poem, 'the other' is a futile and transient reality, nameless and perpetually round like the moon (*Astro perpetuo*), a sad wind from whom tree leaves fly away. The final lines of the casida are strikingly similar to the ending of *Viaje a la luna*, in which the moon 'hurriedly appears' to dominate the scene above a group of trees moved by the wind. Also in *Viaje*, an 'invisible hand' swiftly removes the number-ridden bedsheets in the first sequence, initiating the frenetic pace of the successive images in the film script. The hand is seen as an animator, spurring poetic images into action. It is the force that incites living roots to grow in 'Manos cortadas' and, albeit severed or wounded, it is the poet's guardian in the face of uncertainty:



y las manos del hombre no tienen más sentido  
que imitar a las raíces bajo tierra. ('Gacela de la huída' 2010: 29, ll. 12-13)

Their purpose is to imitate growing roots underground, as they will provide nurture and 'sentido' (sense) in the midst of uncertainty. They both bridge the gap between man and the world and show the connection between them, since man emerges from the earth, desires its nurture (physical, spiritual, erotic) by merging with other bodies, and returns to earth in death.

In a similar vein, the images in 'Gacela de la raíz amarga' relate the root to the distinction between the single and the multiple:

Hay una raíz amarga  
y un mundo de mil terrazas.

Ni la mano más pequeña  
quiebra la puerta del agua.

¿Dónde vas, adónde, dónde?  
Hay un cielo de mil ventanas  
—batalla de abejas lívidas—  
y hay una raíz amarga.

Amarga.  
(2010: 21, ll. 1-9)

*Poema del Cante Jondo* and *Romancero Gitano* contained poems dedicated to the figure of 'El Amargo',<sup>88</sup> an ominous gypsy character embodying fate and mortality, but in this *gacela*, these aspects are added to the root so that its growth and creative capabilities also announce the awareness of mortality. The emphasis on a single raíz amarga, a bitter root, contrasts with the juxtaposed images of objects in groups: 'mil terrazas', 'mil ventanas' and 'abejas lívidas'. While the bitter root in the *gacela* is the source of pain and suffering, its confrontation with the other multiple objects instructs the poet to still embrace it as an inescapable part of his life. Despite the pain, the poet finds in this bitterness a suitable companion and calls his beloved to join him in this awareness of necessary sorrow (¡Amor, enemigo mío, | muerde tu raíz amarga!), in the realisation of the finitude of the body and of the inevitability of death. Not even the smallest hand, that hand which usually provides solace through the sense of touch and through creation, can in this *gacela* break the water door (Ni la mano más pequeña | quiebra la puerta del agua). This liquid door counteracts the rootedness in the poem; it seems like an inevitable flow of transience and ephemerality causing pain and heartache, and perhaps the reason that love/his beloved are seen as an enemy. His emphatic question '¿Dónde vas, adónde, dónde?' places the poet in a place of uncertainty against multiplicity, not knowing where the flow will take him and therefore in need of roots that will anchor him to himself. Lorca had indeed tapped into this uncertainty with the sense of disorientation presented in *Viaje a la luna* through multiple slamming doors, frantic movements of superimposed images and dissolves, and verbal messages of actual disorientation:

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<sup>88</sup> 'Diálogo del Amargo' in *Poema del Cante Jondo* and 'Romance del emplazado' in *Romancero Gitano* both have 'el Amargo' as a protagonist. He is an ill-fated Andalusian gypsy whose imminent death is announced to him in both poems, later coming to fruition among lamenting clamours. Lorca recovered this character from his childhood recollections: el Amargo was a gypsy child who used to scare the young Lorca from his window by making faces and grinning at him (Maya 2005).

14

Caída rápida por una montaña rusa en color azul con doble exposición de letras de *Socorro Socorro*.

15

Cada letrero de *Socorro Socorro* se disuelve en la huella de un pie.

21

[...]Aquí un letrero que diga *No es por aquí*. (1994: 64)

Disorientation and uncertainty cause confusion and fear and clearly ‘this is not the way’.

Rootedness is now crucial to the poet, its bitterness and pain an inevitable part of his existence, just like the roots in ‘Rosa de la muerte’ provided nurturing, ‘earth for the soul’. It is not surprising that most roots systems in the late drawings resemble human vein systems and grow from the wound, as they similarly refer to the awareness of mortality and its inextricable link with desire and creation. Faced with the instability of existence and a multiplicity of identities flowing through the open wound, the image of the root helps the poet achieve some sense of unity with the other (the beloved, reality, art), even if this comes from the awareness of death as an inherent part of life.

### **Doubling and Fusing**

Peral Vega, in his study of Lorca’s use of the *commedia dell’arte* figure of Pierrot in the poetry, drawings and theatre, posits that ‘Lorca knows himself to be mendacious in his public dimension and seeks an alter ego through which to explain himself; Pierrot is a mask, and therefore by his very nature a transient and ever-changing essence’ (2015: 6).

Apart from Pierrot and the Harlequin, characters explored more in Lorca’s 1920s works,<sup>89</sup> further motifs are developed in his later years to deal with the idea of a transient essence.

The many drawings depicting doublings and fusions, the indeterminate and reversible

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<sup>89</sup> See the Chapter 2 section on Lorca’s New York and La Habana drawings.

roles of the lovers in the late poems, and the masks and metamorphoses of characters and objects in *Viaje a la luna*, reinforce this reversibility and fluidity of identities, to the extreme of challenging the notion that essence can be anything other than transient and ever-changing.

Throughout *Diván del Tamarit* and *Sonetos del amor oscuro*, the poetic voice articulates a state of spatiotemporal uncertainty which escapes logic and rationality, a queer fantasy in Muñoz's utopia sense (2009: 22), extending this uncertainty to the status of the subjects in the poems, usually the poet and his beloved:

Quiero dormir un rato,  
un rato, un minuto, un siglo;  
pero que todos sepan que no he muerto;  
[...] que soy la sombra inmensa de mis lágrimas.  
(‘Gacela de la muerte oscura’ 2010: 25, ll. 10-12; 15)

While the poet in ‘Gacela de la muerte oscura’ is taking an ‘obscure’ nap which may last a minute or a century, he states that he is simultaneously dead and not dead, he is but an immense shadow. Similarly, the amorphous creature depicted in ‘Solo la muerte’ [Fig. 8] as well as the ‘Man of Veins’ in *Viaje a la luna* [Fig. 28] inhabit a space and a time that is also a queer fantasy, where their obscurity and incongruity stem from their defiance of norms governing existence. They are simultaneously alive and dead, they possess a reversibility which impedes any stable essence, all of which requires more and more ‘masks’ to be created, more doubled heads and bodies to emerge. The poetic beloved is usually included in the doubling and fusing process, as both lovers’ bodies and identities often tend to merge and coalesce:

Pero ¡pronto! Que unidos, enlazados,

boca rota de amor y alma mordida,  
 el tiempo nos encuentre destrozados.  
 ('Soneto de la guirnalda de rosas' 2010: 55, ll. 12-14)

La aurora nos unió sobre la cama,  
 las bocas puestas sobre el chorro helado  
 de una sangre sin fin que se derrama.  
 ('Noche del amor insomne' 2010: 75, ll. 9-11)

Trying to elude time, the lovers find their union when their bodies are destructured and become fused, in an image which also becomes double: it represents their erotic encounter as well as their encounter with mortality. They are bleeding to death but feeding off each other's blood. Their selves are superimposed. Similarly, the many doubled Pierrots and Harlequins in Lorca's graphic works depict the superimpositions and therefore fusions of personae: a man and his dual/multiple self or two lovers erotically converging. The drawing 'Marinero del "Amor"' (1934) [Fig. 11] implies that the superimposed doubled bodies are embracing or kissing each other and there is only one heart which the bodies share.<sup>90</sup> The heart, drawn unrealistically outside the sailor's chest, seems to be pierced by a cross and has roots coming out of it, while the word 'amor' is written across the cap the sailor is wearing on his head. The superimposed body is merely a silhouette or a shadow: only its hands are clearly drawn while the rest is a sinewy line going in and out of the sailor's body through his eyes and mouth. In 'Muerte de Santa Rodegunda', the doubling happens in the moment in which the body is bleeding and vomiting, breaking open and dying, so its limits are doubly confounded: on the one hand

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<sup>90</sup> An earlier drawing, 'El beso' (1927) [Fig. 27] also represents doubling as a fusion of love and death. Almost a self-portrait, as the doubled character closely resembles Lorca, the doubled head consists of a face with full features and a second amorphous head superimposed, the latter with just a mouth and a collar and tie. The second head, almost like a shadow, is coloured red and yellow, with red dots resembling blood, and joins the 'main' head irregularly, both on top of it and behind it in a play of perspectives. The focal point of the drawing consists of the two heads' pair of mouths drawn next two each other, barely touching in a kiss of sorts.

its body is fused with another body while on the other its wounds and orifices force it to fuse with the outside world. Lastly, one of Lorca's final drawings [Fig. 25], a graphic signature dating from 1936, depicts a doubled head —very similar to the figure of Pierrot — who doubly cries as its two faces look in different directions, encircled in a thick spiralling line ending in a pointed arrow. A small moon and the transposition of the name 'Federico' complete the drawing, which encapsulates the self/other and visual/verbal fluidity present in the late works. As word and image are fused in the drawing, so are the limits between Lorca and his work. The double head portrait is dual in many ways: it is an intermedial space in which an autograph accommodates visual and verbal expressions, but it is also inhabited by Lorca the man and Lorca the artist simultaneously. The issue of authorship is mixed in with issues of selfhood and otherness, confusing the limits separating biography from artwork, poetry from drawing, the ludic element characteristic of the clown figures from the constructedness and incongruity of the grotesque, or in other words, 'Federico' from the crying heads.

In *Viaje a la luna*, three kinds of fusions take place. First, the very configuration of the film script and its adherence to the cinematic medium enables objects and body parts to merge. As Auerbach posited, 'editing threatens the body, threatens to dismember it' (2007: 98). The fusion of tableaux through the sequencing used by Lorca in the script joins and doubles things at random, as the imitation of editing by the rapid succession of segments makes use of close-ups, dissolves and superimpositions to transform, dismember and recreate bodies. Furthermore, the Bakhtinian fusion of body and world is also represented: vomiting, open mouths, open wounds and genitalia allow Lorca to use the grotesque to play with bodily limits and mix the beautiful and the disgusting. Lastly, the doubling of characters themselves, through masks, alter egos and metamorphoses, is a prominent part of *Viaje*: the Man of Veins takes off his harlequin costume [Figs. 26 and

28] before his first appearance, then transforms into a young man, takes off his mask to become the Man of Veins once more and finally turns into a corpse; the woman in the lift transforms into a statue; the couple mocking the corpse transform into a Hollywood couple; and the Moon itself transforms into a human head [Fig. 29].

Significantly, all these instances of doubling and fusions share a common aesthetic intention to represent the close interrelation of desire and death. From the lift sequence in *Viaje a la luna* in which the Man of Veins kisses/rapes/kills the young girl, to the erotic and deadly reversibility of the lovers in *Diván del Tamarit* and *Sonetos del amor oscuro*, and the doubled bodies both nurturing and wounding each other in the drawings, Lorca's play with limits is reinvented through multiple media but follows a rigorous and systematic development. Paradoxically, it is not a linear development, but a fluid and circular one, open like a wound that never seals and round like the moon in which desire and death converge. Quite fittingly, the circular motifs pervading the film script and the late drawings and poems (eyes, moons, flowers, dots, tears, blood drops, wounds) mirror the cyclical transformations through which objects and bodies are constantly operating.

The fluidity of bodies and identities thus suggests the impossibility and futility of attempting to pin them down and limit them. The norms trying to govern them will always need to be rethought and reconfigured. As Lorca states in the epigraph: '*duende* is never repeated, just like the sea shapes in a storm'. The fluidity and reversibility that Lorca's queer subjects and objects acquire allows the artwork, be it through one medium or through a mix of media, to perform the creation of *lo insólito*: that which breaks norms, and, in so doing, becomes something new and unprecedented, which never stays still, and can never be replicated. In this ephemerality lies the special substance that *duende* makes alive through a 'forma viva' mysteriously wounded by death.

## Conclusion. A Poetic Metamorphosis

The aim of this thesis was to reassess Federico García Lorca's less studied post-New York works in light of *Teoría y juego del duende*, arguing that two key aspects of this lecture so far overlooked —i.e. queerness and intermediality— play an essential role in his aesthetics. Lorca's later period was an intense (and, very fittingly, non-linear) journey across countries, genres, media and ideas. It was a climactic moment, brutally interrupted by his assassination, evidencing Lorca's continuous ability for artistic metamorphosis. In order to acknowledge the importance of Lorca's late corpus it is necessary to speak of intermediality, transgression of limits and fluidity. *Teoría y juego del duende* is thus an apt compass to navigate his late works, since the playful and limit-breaking spirit embodies the Andalusian poet's taste for queerness, that is, for the desire to rethink and reconfigure what seems to categorise, limit and define what we know and distinguish it from what we do not: what escapes those limits, what is different and becomes elusive, mysterious and undefinable.

Cleminson and Vázquez García's proposed 'Mediterranean model' of sexuality, in which an essentialisation of homosexuality is virtually impossible and unstable desires 'take preference over any strong expression of identity' (2007: 275), has offered a suitable framework to approach Lorca's poetics through the queer lens. Lorca's late multimedia works go beyond the binary distinctions homosexual-heterosexual and male-female and operate by means of limit transgressions, nuances, and fantasies. There is not a clear or stable identity (sexual, of gender, or ontological) that can be ascribed to the personae in his later corpus, as there is not a clear identity between Lorca the man and Lorca the artist. In the *duende* lecture, Lorca sheds light on his play with limits by following a tricky performative route: whilst theorising about his aesthetic theory, he masks or



disguises its complexity by also making it work as artistic creation itself, by creating poetic images that draw attention away from themselves as actual constructed images intended to transgress the very process of poetic creation. The lecture is poetry at work, but poetry which reaffirms the poet's intention to question the fabric of poetry (and of drawing, painting, dancing, acting, etc.), and their capacity to represent reality and produce meaning. He performs an act of creation while explaining his process of creation. In revealing to his audience the secrets to *duende*, he performs *duende*, battles with it, just as if he was in fact reciting poetry. Therein lies Lorca's genius, capable of presenting itself as an artistic artefact which not only emerges as aesthetic substance, but also provides a space for epistemological enquiry and, most importantly, for artistic and existential criticism.

The examination of the late poetry in chapter one has shown how the language used in *Diván del Tamarit* and *Sonetos del amor oscuro* purports above all to boast its creativity and unexpectedness, to expose its incongruity and its deliberate transgressions of logic and reason. Lorca follows a poetic logic and plays with language to achieve shocking images and metaphors and illogical or incongruous associations of meaning —'lo insólito, lo inventado de la obra de un hombre' (OC III: 314). I have argued that the bodies and relationships among the lovers and other personae in the poems analysed are never fixed and stable. They move in a constant process of metamorphosis and reconfiguration, which allows Lorca to destabilise conventional ideas of sex, sexuality, body, soul, life, temporality and death as fixed and immutable. The fractures produced by the wound of Lorca's *duende* reveal the fluidity of these processes, such that the poem is not only language but also imagistic creation, the body of the poet is also the beloved's body and their sexual desire is not determined by any normative principles like chromosomal sex or gender. By questioning the possibility of absolute truths and stable

ontologies, Lorca creates queer bodies who inhabit a liminal space in which spatiotemporal coordinates are suspended, unintelligible and unnameable, where the death drive signalled by the queer emerges to announce an impossible fantasy yet to come in which all limits and norms cease to exist. I have also suggested that ‘obscure’ encapsulates the mysterious, inarticulable and norm-transgressing qualities of desire explored in both poetic collections. The love in the *gacelas*, *casidas* and sonnets is neither clearly homosexual nor heterosexual, because precisely gender indeterminacy, fluidity and reversibility of roles recur. It is this permeability which makes the poetic subjects and objects queer, their erotic and destructive desires being as ambivalent as their elusive (sexual) identities. The abundance of *chiaroscuros* epitomises the pleasure/pain and being/non-being ambivalence, while the reappropriation and queering of tropes taken from Spanish and European poetic traditions creates scenes in which the limits of life and death, sexual desire and spiritual suffering become destabilised and blurred. Rather than categorising Lorca’s poetic discourse into a gay paradigm, I have argued that a queer lens is more suitable to approach his work in light of the ubiquitous fluidity and transgressions of (hetero)normativity that characterise his poetics.

In chapter two I have analysed the drawings from the late period in their own right, concluding that images of the body are taken to an extreme where limiting and constraining principles, such as geometrical composition, logic or rationality are disrupted to give the metamorphic grotesque and its mysterious desire a leading position. Only thus will the art work convey a sense of newness and unprecedented-ness: what is substantial in art for Lorca. This artistic substance, though, is deeply rooted in pain and suffering, darkness and obscurity, fracture and deconstruction. *Duende* represents what is mysterious in art, seeks to attack the artist, to cause a wound that resonates in the deepest spaces within the human body, bringing out the blood and the most basic instincts in it,

and inevitably announcing death. Creating a 'forma viva' implies forcing that form to face mortality. Death is positivised, as are other disrupting elements such as blood, bodily issue, violence or physical deconstruction. The late graphic works also join forces with the other media to explore fluid identities and sexualities. The male gaze subjected to male figures and the veiling of sex and gender marks are paired with Eros and Thanatos to articulate Lorca's queer vision of heterodox desire. Considering the complexity and profundity they reveal, it is then fair to say that the late drawings were by no means a passing fad for Lorca nor unpolished and unfinished sketches: they were conceived as poetic images in their own right communicating through the immediacy and viscosity of drawing some of his overarching aesthetic principles.

In the chapter examining Lorca's film script, I have argued that cinema allows the poet to create an anti-narrative revelling in a spectacle of death. It is more apt to look at *Viaje a la luna* as a reference to the roller coaster ride 'Trip to the Moon' Lorca visited on New York's Coney Island than to Méliès's eponymous *Voyage dans la lune* and the linear journey on which its characters embark. Like the roller coaster, the 'trip' proposed in Lorca's film script is a disorienting and nausea-infusing one, with constant abrupt spatiotemporal breaches and corporeal jolts and transmutations that go from the grotesque and the repulsive to the humorous and the theatrical. It is no surprise that Lorca briefly situates the spectator on a roller coaster in the film script and that he also entitled a poem 'Paisaje de la multitud que vomita' (*Poeta en Nueva York*) in evocation of the aforementioned New York funfair and its dizzy visitors. *Viaje a la luna* proves that the filmic medium allowed Lorca to explore the interrelationship of desire and death in new aesthetic ways, and it offers a new space through which to represent the human body and the process of artistic expression. The limits of corporeality are transgressed in order to challenge the norms, rationalisation and measurability that modernity introduced at the

turn of the twentieth century, exemplifying the new visual means that cinema had to create unexpected and shocking images and turn them spectacular and fascinating. Lorca's *duende* is a boundary creature, and the bodies in the film script are constantly metamorphosing and crossing boundaries between desire and mortality. Their corporealities and identities are unstable and multifaceted, at times fragmented and adopting unexpected forms and shapes, changing and fusing with other bodies, expressing a variety of emotions at random, and defying spatiotemporal laws and norms. The structure of the film script eliminates causality and linearity, which creates an atmosphere of disorientation and spatiotemporal confusion. It presents a tableau narrative whose emphasis is on process, shock and display rather than on narrative continuity. Its oneiric nature mirrors other avant-garde texts and works of art of the time, being particularly close to Surrealist elements in films such as *Un chien andalou* or *Le Sang d'un Poète*, but it also resonates with the 'cinema of attractions' model attributed to earlier films of the 1900s in its visual unexpectedness and spectacular display. Rather than engaging the spectator in a linear narrative that unfolds before his/her eyes, Lorca shocks and challenges the spectator with an 'attraction' that resembles poetic thought and emotion more than storytelling. In the poet's opinion, the greatness of film lies not in its rational explanation but 'in the freedom we all enjoy to interpret [it] as we will' (Morris 1980: 123).

Considering the multimedia production of Spanish and European avant-garde artists and how it influenced Lorca's post-New York years, it was also necessary to take into account ideas of intermediality to gain a wider understanding of his *oeuvre*. A comparative analysis of Lorca's late multimedia works proves that the queer aspects derived from the theory of *duende* also destabilise the limits differentiating and separating media. Thinking through ideas and discourses on intermediality, the close readings in

chapter four have shown that the recurrent word-image interrelations within the three media reveal Lorca's fluid vision of the arts. His search for the unexpected requires ways of representation that fuse different levels of perception and supersede norms limiting and compartmentalising media. In parallel, some overarching aspects derived from Lorca's aesthetics are articulated in specific ways through each medium while referring to one another, particularly motifs like roots, hands, roses and circular objects and processes like doublings and fusions. The sailors, calligrams, *commedia dell'arte* characters, and complex artefacts like 'Muerte de Santa Rodegunda' also attest to Lorca's poetic fluidity, not only roaming across media limits but suggesting that identity is equally fluid and unstable.

The three media examined in this thesis have been relatively neglected by scholars to date, but they all share a unique combination of verbal and visual elements and a particular relationship with the performative. While hinging on the visuality of performance, they can be considered 'embryos': artefacts in an intermediate state between their inception and their actualisation through embodied performances. While this transitional process is more straightforward in the theatre, the other three media have not yet been analysed as potentially performative works, an approach which Lorca's aesthetic theory makes prominent and necessary. The intermedial elements in these works expose their potentiality to be articulated through other media while simultaneously adhering to a single channel of articulation. They all offer commentaries on the medium they belong to and make the reader/viewer/spectator aware of their constructedness by showing the fragile seams through which other media can easily enter. Lorca breaks media boundaries in order to show that his aesthetics goes beyond limits and restrictions: he seeks to create living poetic images worth experiencing by whichever means and channels were available. Conversely, the ways in which visuality relates to language and

in which fluidity is represented in the poetry, drawings, and film script have yielded unique aspects worth exploring in their own right. If all arts are capable of *duende*, it is clear that the particular *poiesis* in poetry, drawing, and film can perform the Lorquian boundary play as well as music or theatre can.

It would be valuable nonetheless for further research to extend the scope of this study to Lorca's late theatre and his other poetic works of this time. The queer and intermedial aspects of *duende* examined in this thesis would prove productive if applied to the 'impossible' plays, mostly written during the New York years, as well as to *Poeta en Nueva York*. Similarly, the rural trilogy and *Amor de Don Perlimplín con Belisa en su jardín* could also be examined with reference to intermediality and the norm-transgressing qualities of *duende*. Due to space and time limitations and to the many existing scholarly works that have analysed these Lorca works in depth with some tangential references to *duende* and queer theory,<sup>91</sup> I have not included them in my study.

Lorca's late poetic works, his drawings and his film script also share a preference for the representation of the human body and the five senses, but each destabilises this representation by deconstructing bodily and sensory limits. In other words, they all show open wounds exhibiting the fragility of their construction and their limits broken at the seams, and therefore letting what escapes through those wounds emerge as limitless. Lorca's *duende* seeks the '*performative transmission* of artistic creativity' (Mayhew 2011b: 167), an artistic substance that will produce a deep and extreme emotion in the spectator. Redefining and disrupting ideas presumed to be stable and logical is meant to provoke this extreme reaction, questioning the possibility of true and stable identities and instead presenting them in a constant process of transformation. The heterodoxy and

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<sup>91</sup> This study is especially indebted to the works by Paul Julian Smith (1998a), Sarah Wright (2000), Martha J. Nandorfy (2003), Carlos Jerez-Farrán (2004), Paul McDermid (2007), Maria Delgado (2008) and Federico Bonaddio (2010).

metamorphosis of desire and death are explored through characters who keep mutating incessantly and embody theatricality and artificiality, as well as through spatiotemporal disruptions which avoid a synthesis of the desire/mortality dichotomy. The ‘truthfulness’ of the personae and the boundaries between Eros and Thanatos are turned unstable, posing a threat to the integrity of meaning but also offering a liberating vision of interpretation, in which each reader/spectator/viewer is given the freedom to create his/her own meanings.

Desire and *poiesis* are both taken by Lorca to the edge of destruction so that they become new and reborn, communicating *duende*’s mystical and transgressive qualities when they are presented as a spectacle to watch, as a poem to be read, or as a drawing to be admired and deciphered. Lorca’s *duende* gives new meanings to avant-garde film, indeed taking the spectator on a poetic but spiralling and transformative trip to the moon. Also, in imitating and honouring the canons of love poetry, he redefines and adapts them to create obscure Lorquian metaphors and images, inscribing folkloric or Petrarchan elements in an unprecedented frame where desire and death are never again separate. Last but not least, his plastic poems or lyrical abstractions play with the literal lines that encircle his graphic compositions, picturing those bleeding wounds in actual colours which redefine in their own right the Spanish grotesque and the ever popular sailor portraits of the early twentieth century. These three poetic artefacts should be considered on a par with Lorca’s late theatre and his most canonical works as proof of his special embodiment of Andalusia, Spain and the European avant-garde and of his deliberate defiance of limits and boundaries. Despite their elusiveness and obscurity, *duende*’s intermedial mysteries of desire and death situate Lorca as a queer artist and thinker with legitimate relevance within Hispanic studies and cultures today.

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## Filmography

*Battleship Potemkin*. 1925. Dir. by Sergei Eisenstein (Soviet Union: Mosfilm)

*Bodas de sangre*. 1981. Dir. by Carlos Saura (Spain: Suevia Films)

*Cómo se hizo Viaje a la luna*. 1998. Dir. by Frederic Amat (Spain: Comunidad de Herederos de Federico García Lorca/ Frederic Amat/ Canal Sur Televisión/ Ovideo TV/ BTV)

*Early Cinema: Primitives and Pioneers*, DVD (United Kingdom: British Film Institute)

*Entr'acte*. 1924. Dir. by René Clair (France: Société Nouvelle des Acacias/Criterion Collection)

*Excursion dans la lune*. 1908. Dir. by Segundo de Chomón (France: Pathé Frères) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwvVnXtobwU>> [accessed May 2017]

*La casa de Bernarda Alba*. 1987. Dir. by Mario Camus (Spain: Paraíso/TVE)

*La Grenouille*. 1908. Dir. by Segundo de Chomón (France: Pathé/Les Archives du Film du CNC) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ed1kBEO1bPs>> [accessed May 2017]

*La mala educación*. 2004. Dir. by Pedro Almodóvar (Spain: El Deseo)

*La novia*. 2015. Dir. by Paula Ortiz (Spain: Get in the Picture Productions/Mantar Film/ Cine Chromatix KG/TVE)

*Le Sang d'un Poète*. 1932. Dir. by Jean Cocteau (France: The Criterion Collection)

*Little Ashes*. 2009. Dir. by Paul Morrison (United Kingdom: PT Films/Aria Films/Met Film/Factotum Barcelona)

*Making of Viaje a la luna*. 1998. Dir by Frederic Amat <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CpahIqI0knA24>> [accessed September 2013]

*Métamorphoses*. 1912. Dir. by Segundo de Chomón (France: Pathé/Cinémathèque Française) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDafGw5PGHw>> [accessed May 2017]

*Metropolis*. 1927. Dir. by Fritz Lang (Germany: UFA)

*Muerte en Granada (The Disappearance of García Lorca)*. 1997. Dir. by Marcos Zurinaga (Spain/USA: Antena 3 TV/Canal +/Enrique Cerezo)

*Todo sobre mi madre*. 1998. Dir. by Pedro Almodóvar (Spain: El Deseo)

*Un chien andalou*. 1929. Dir. by Luis Buñuel. Screenplay by Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí (France: Grands Films Classiques)

*Viaje a la luna*. 1998. Dir. by Frederic Amat (Spain: Comunidad de Herederos de Federico García Lorca/ Frederic Amat/ Canal Sur Televisión/ Ovideo TV)

*Voyage dans la lune*. 1902. Dir. by Georges Méliès (France: Star Film Company) <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_FrdVdKlxUk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_FrdVdKlxUk)> [accessed September 2013]

**Appendix****Drawings - *Dibujos* (Federico García Lorca, 1987, ed. by Mario Hernández)****Film Stills - *Viaje a la luna* (Frederic Amat, 1998)**

Figure 1: 'Busto de hombre muerto', ca. 1932.



Figure 2: 'Joven y Pirámides (Deseo de las ciudades muertas)', New York, ca. 1929-30.



Figure 3: 'Ilustración del 900', La Habana, 1930.

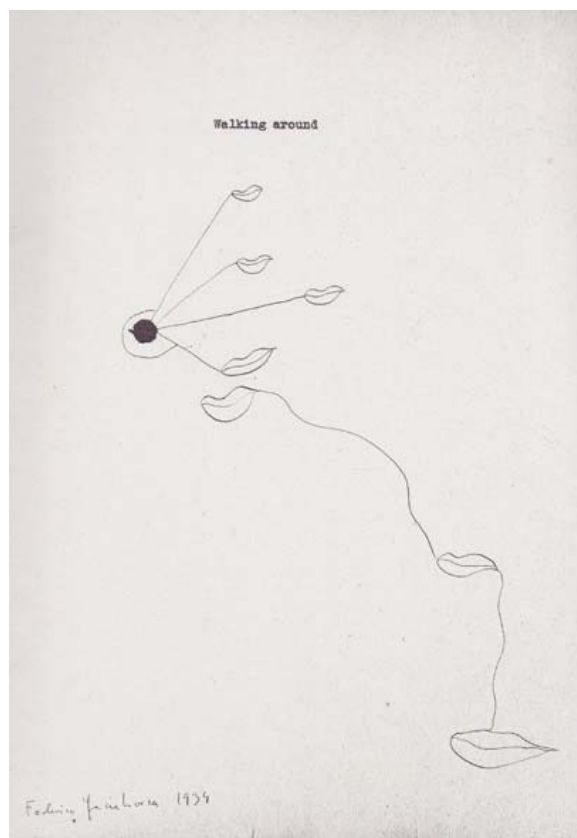


Figure 4: 'Labios (Walking around)', Buenos Aires, 1934.



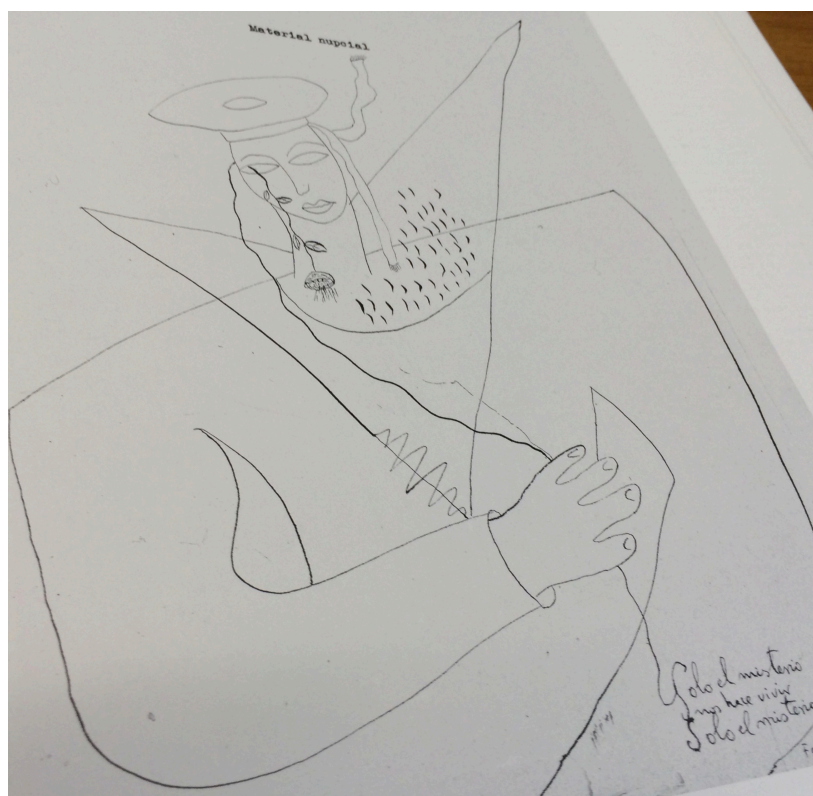


Figure 5: 'Material nupcial', Buenos Aires, 1934.

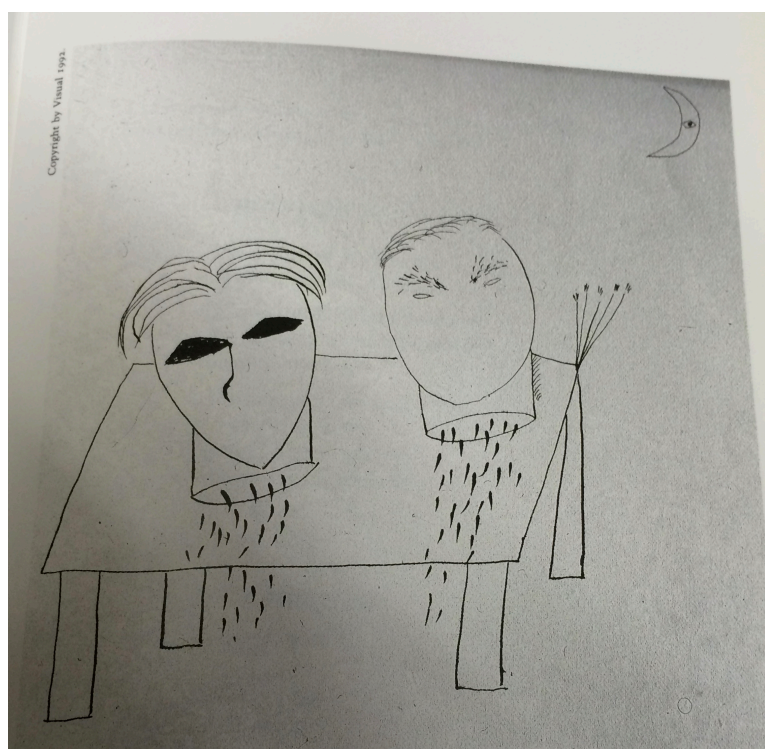


Figure 6: 'Cabezas cortadas de Federico García Lorca y Pablo Neruda', Buenos Aires, 1934.

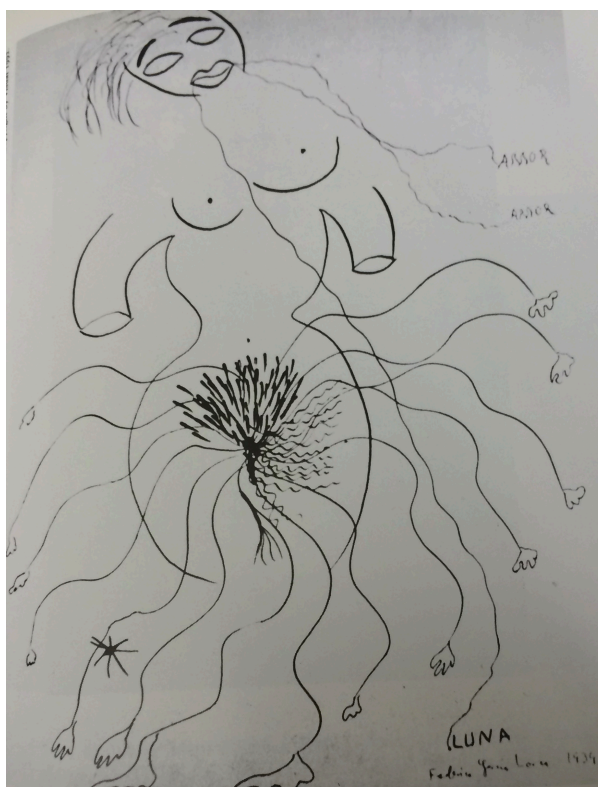


Figure 7: 'Venus (Agua sexual)', Buenos Aires, 1934.

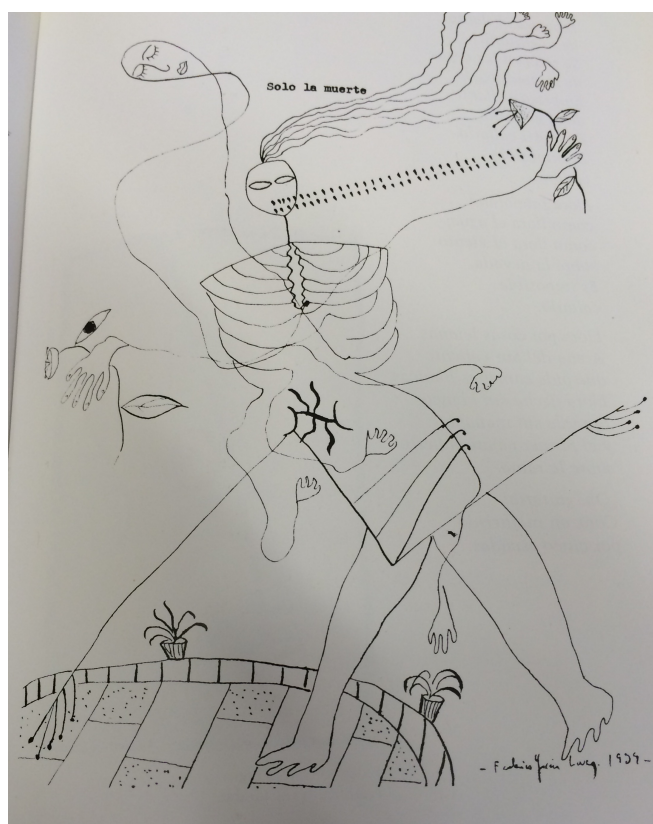


Figure 8: 'Solo la muerte', Buenos Aires, 1934.

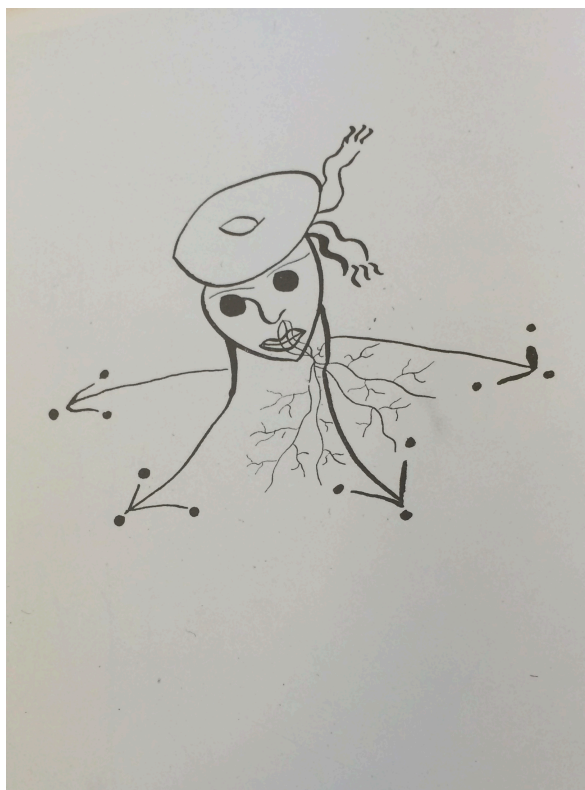


Figure 9: 'Busto de marinero con flechas', Buenos Aires, 1933.

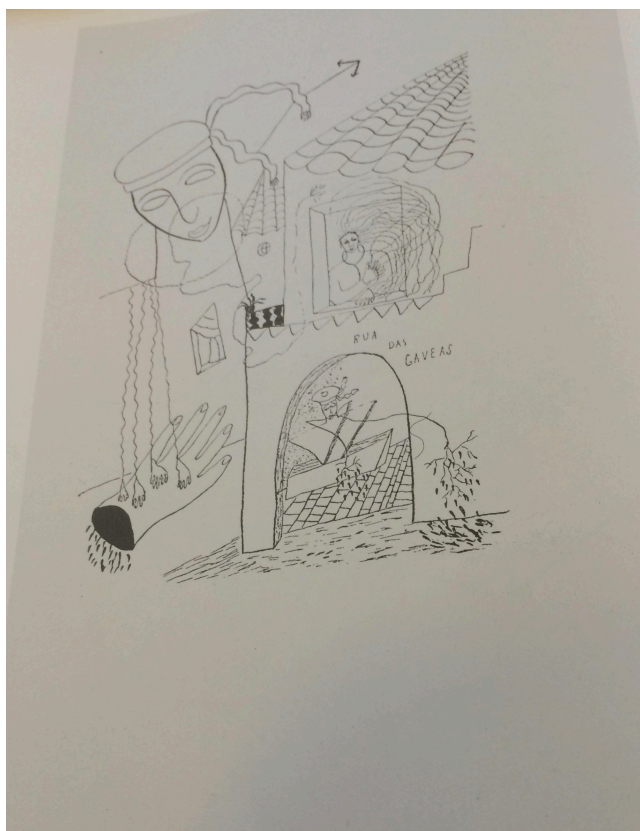


Figure 10: 'Rua das Gaveas', Buenos Aires, 1934.



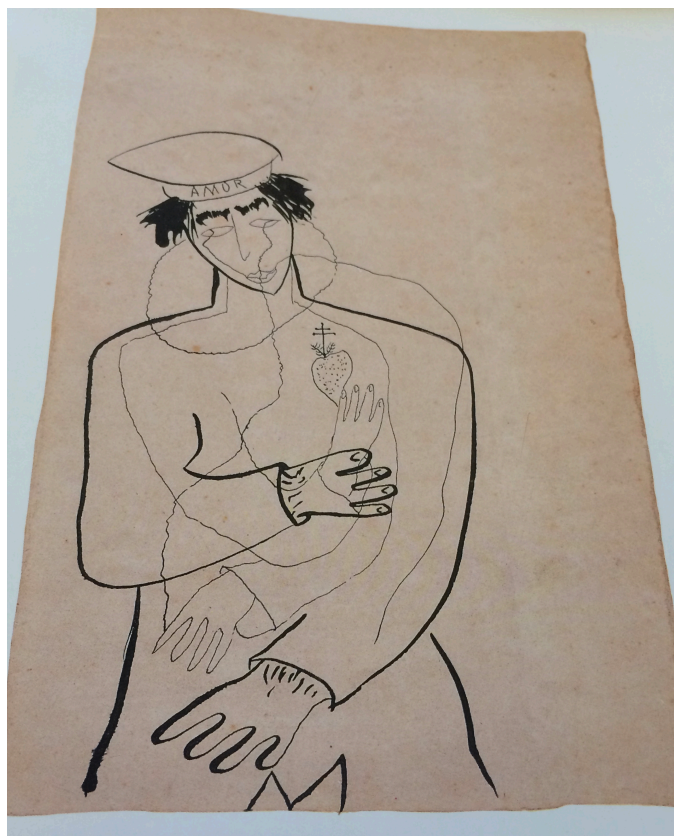


Figure 11: 'Marinero del "Amor"', Buenos Aires, 1934.



Figure 12: 'Manos cortadas', India ink on rag paper, ca. 1935-36.

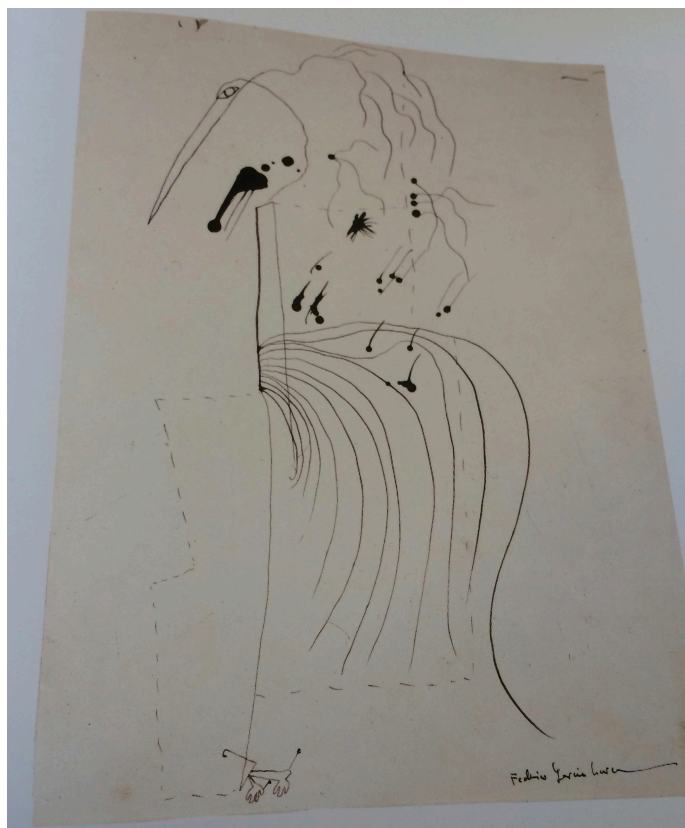


Figure 13: 'Figura de pájaro', 1935-1936.

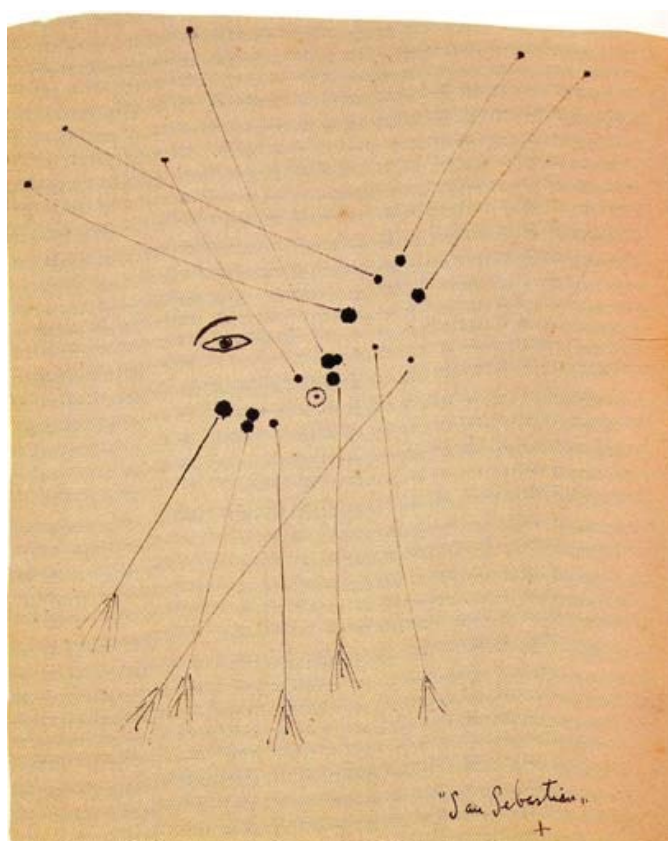


Figure 14: 'San Sebastián', 1927.



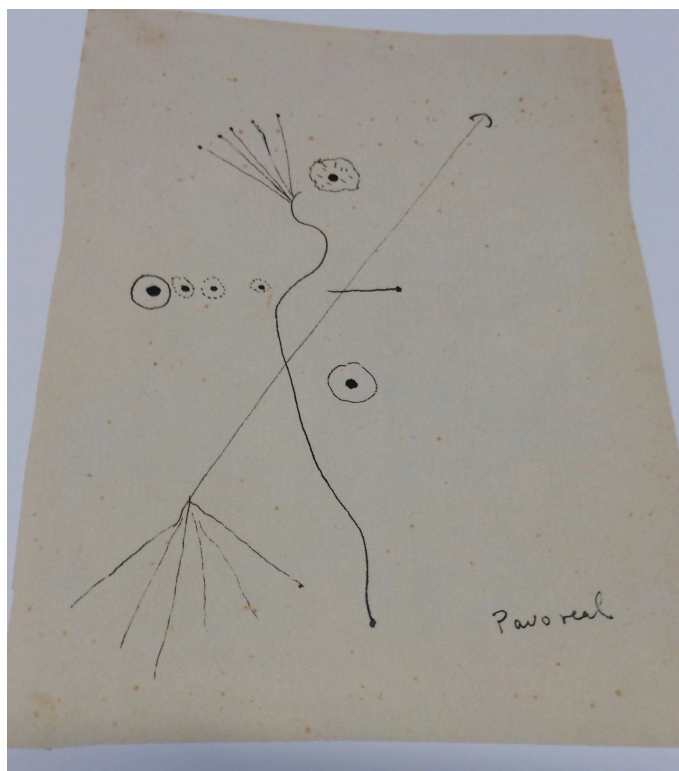


Figure 15: 'Pavo real', 1927.

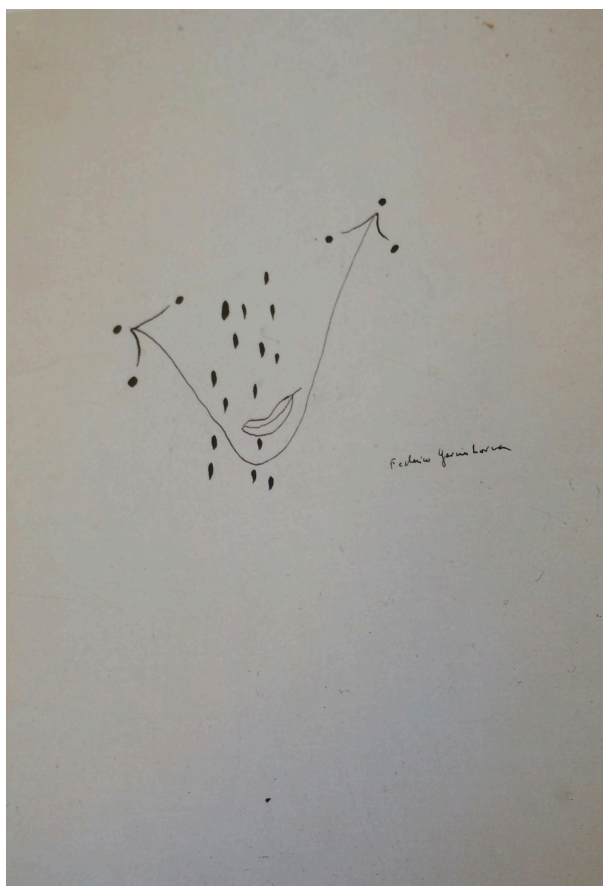


Figure 16: 'Rostro de las dos flechas', ca.1935-1936.

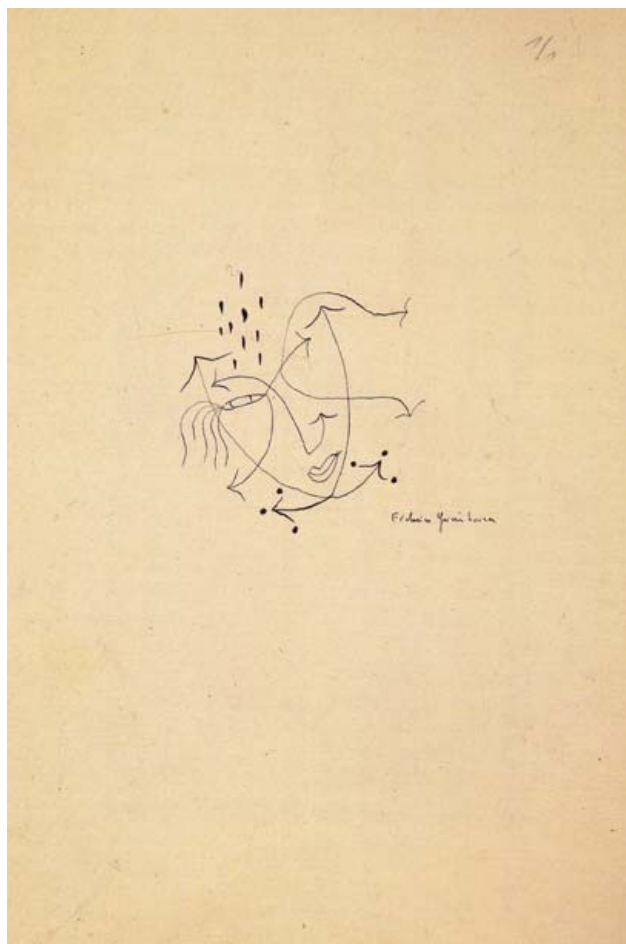


Figure 17: 'Rostro con flechas', ca.1935-1936.

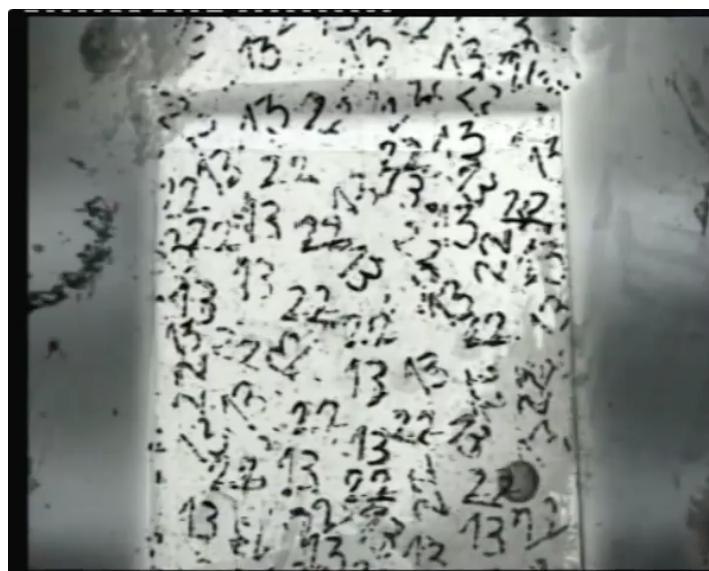


Figure 18: Amat's white bed covered by ants and numbers simultaneously.



Figure 19: Amat's kaleidoscope of fish, agonising or beating with life.



Figure 20: Full-frontal nudity has an ambivalent role in relation to sexual desire and mortality in *Viaje a la luna*, and Amat's portrayal of the Man of Veins makes this relationship explicit.

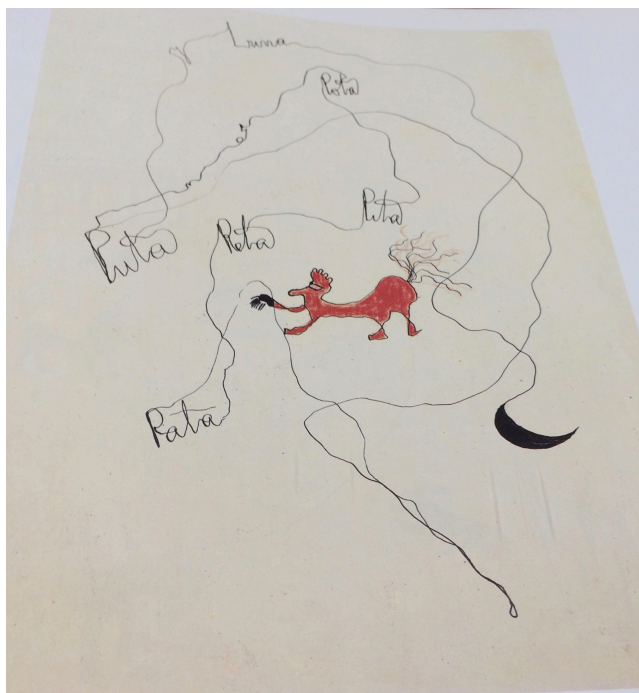


Figure 21: 'Putas y luna', 1934.

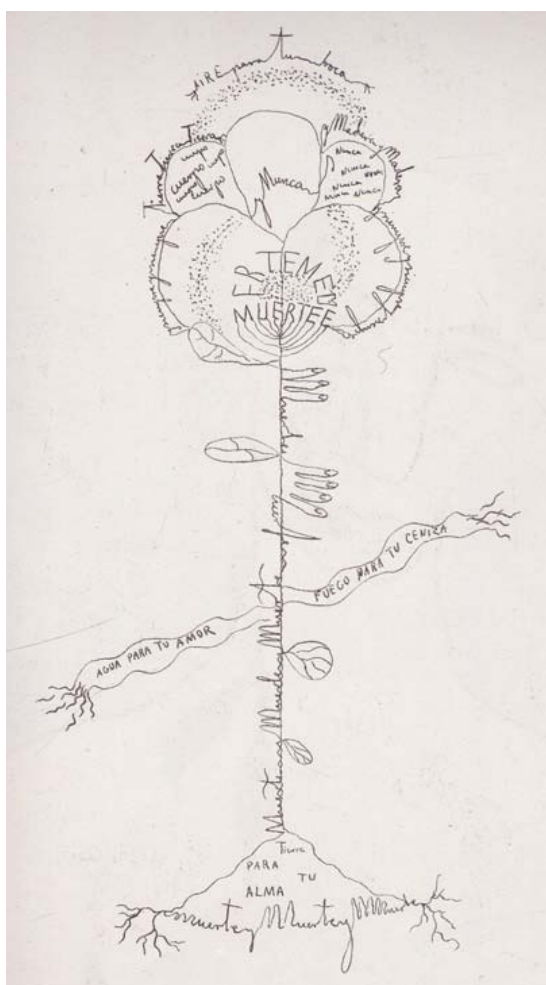


Figure 22: 'Rosa de la muerte' Calligram, Buenos Aires, 1934.



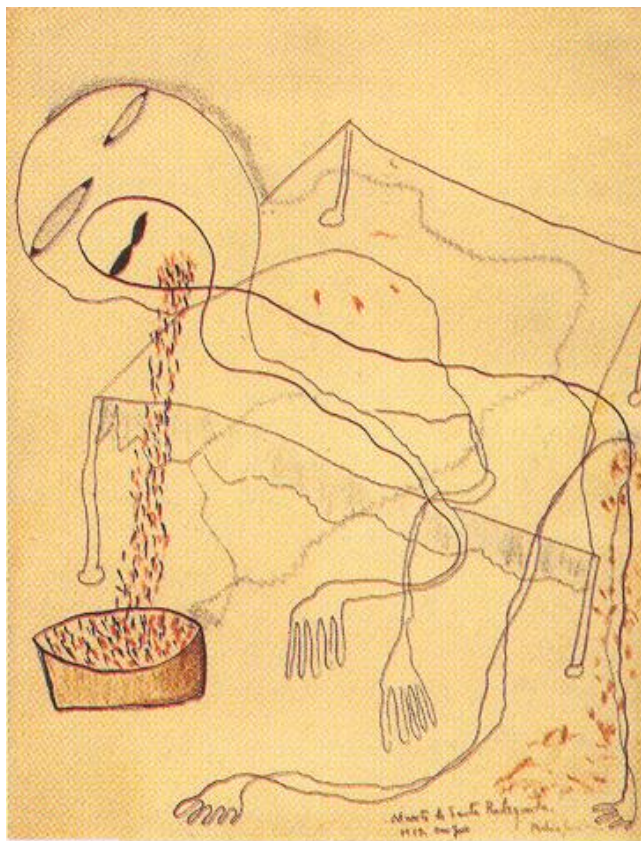


Figure 23: 'Muerte de Santa Rodegunda', 1929.

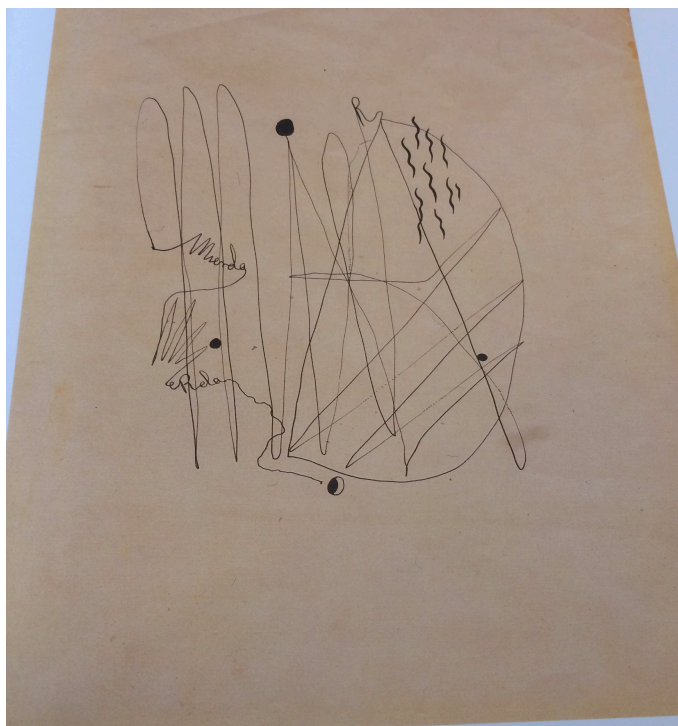


Figure 24: 'Mierda. Caligrama', ca. 1934-36.

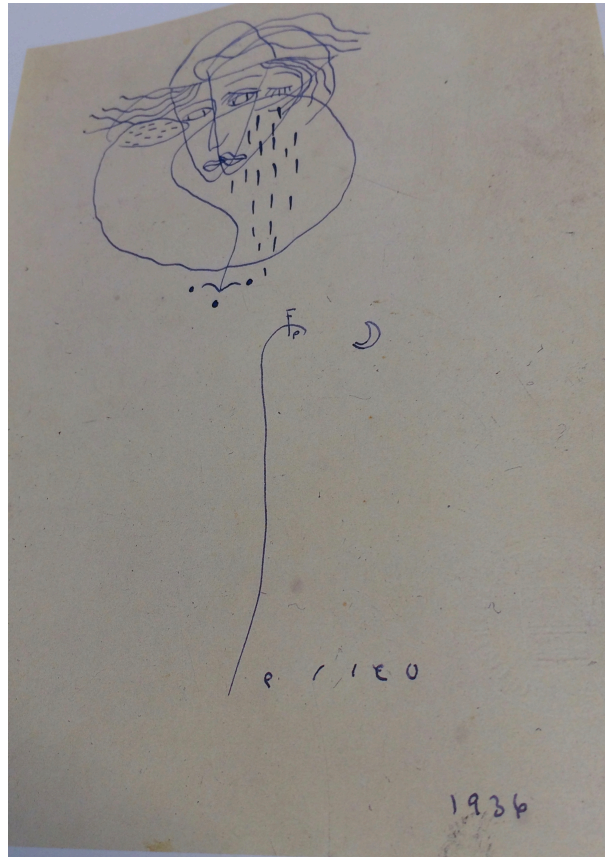


Figure 25: 'Signature with doubled head, arrow and moon', 1936.



Figure 26: The Harlequin costume.





Figure 27: 'El beso', 1927.



Figure 28: The Man of Veins.



Figure 29: Moon/head vomiting in Amat's *Viaje a la luna*.